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THE SEPOY MUTINY

AS SEEN BY A SUBALTERN

FROM DELHI TO LUCKNOW

BY

COLONEL EDWARD VIBART

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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1898

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PREFACE.

That portion of the present volume which refers to the Sepoy Revolt at Delhi originally appeared some months ago in an abridged form in the pages of the *Cornhill Magazine*. Since its publication in that periodical, the author has received many suggestions to publish his personal recollections of those eventful days in book form; and, although feeling naturally reluctant to add another volume of Mutiny reminiscences to the large number which have already appeared, yet as the writer is now one of the very few still alive who was an actual eye-witness of the stirring episodes connected with

the Delhi outbreak, and possibly the only surviving officer of the garrison in Delhi when the Mutiny broke out, perhaps the present little book, narrating his adventures on that memorable occasion, together with his subsequent experiences of the campaign of 1857–58, from Delhi to Lucknow, may not be considered altogether devoid of interest by the general reader.

An interesting chapter by P. V. Luke, Esq., C.I.E., giving the true version of the so-called "fateful telegram," despatched by the youthful signaller at Delhi to his brother signallers at Umballa (published in *Macmillan's Magazine* for October, 1897), just as the insurgents were about to take possession of cantonments, and which, not without good reason, is popularly supposed to have saved India, is also, by the courteous permission of the author and publishers, added to the narrative.

And lastly, for the benefit of those readers

who are unacquainted with the particulars of the Meerut outbreak—which preceded that at Delhi by only a few hours—and thus to present a connected account of both these historical events in a handy form, a supplementary chapter, extracted from a most interesting little work entitled "Mutiny Memoirs," published in 1891, by the Pioneer Press in India, from the graphic pen of Colonel A. R. D. Mackenzie, C.B., is likewise inserted at the end of the volume.

With reference to the illustrations—which it is hoped may contribute to whatever interest the letter-press may possess—the majority are copies of some valuable photographs which have been placed at the disposal of the author by an old friend, George Ricketts, Esq., C.B., late of the Bengal Civil Service, formerly member of the Board of Revenue for the North-West Provinces of India, a name honourably associated in the military annals of the Mutiny with his

plucky fight with the Jullundur mutineers near Loodianah (of which place he was in civil charge) in June, 1857, to whose kindly encouragement it is mainly due that the writer has ventured upon the task of inditing these reminiscences. Two illustrations, selected from an interesting collection of photographic views taken at the time of the Mutiny, now in the possession of Mr. W. B. Lenthall, of Southsea, have, by his kind permission, been added to the volume. One of these, facing page 170, represents the largest of the two barracks which stood in the centre of Sir Hugh Wheeler's intrenchment at Cawnpore, whilst the other, facing page 190, depicts the noble structure known as the Huseinabad Mosque at Lucknow.

EDWARD VIBART.

October, 1898.

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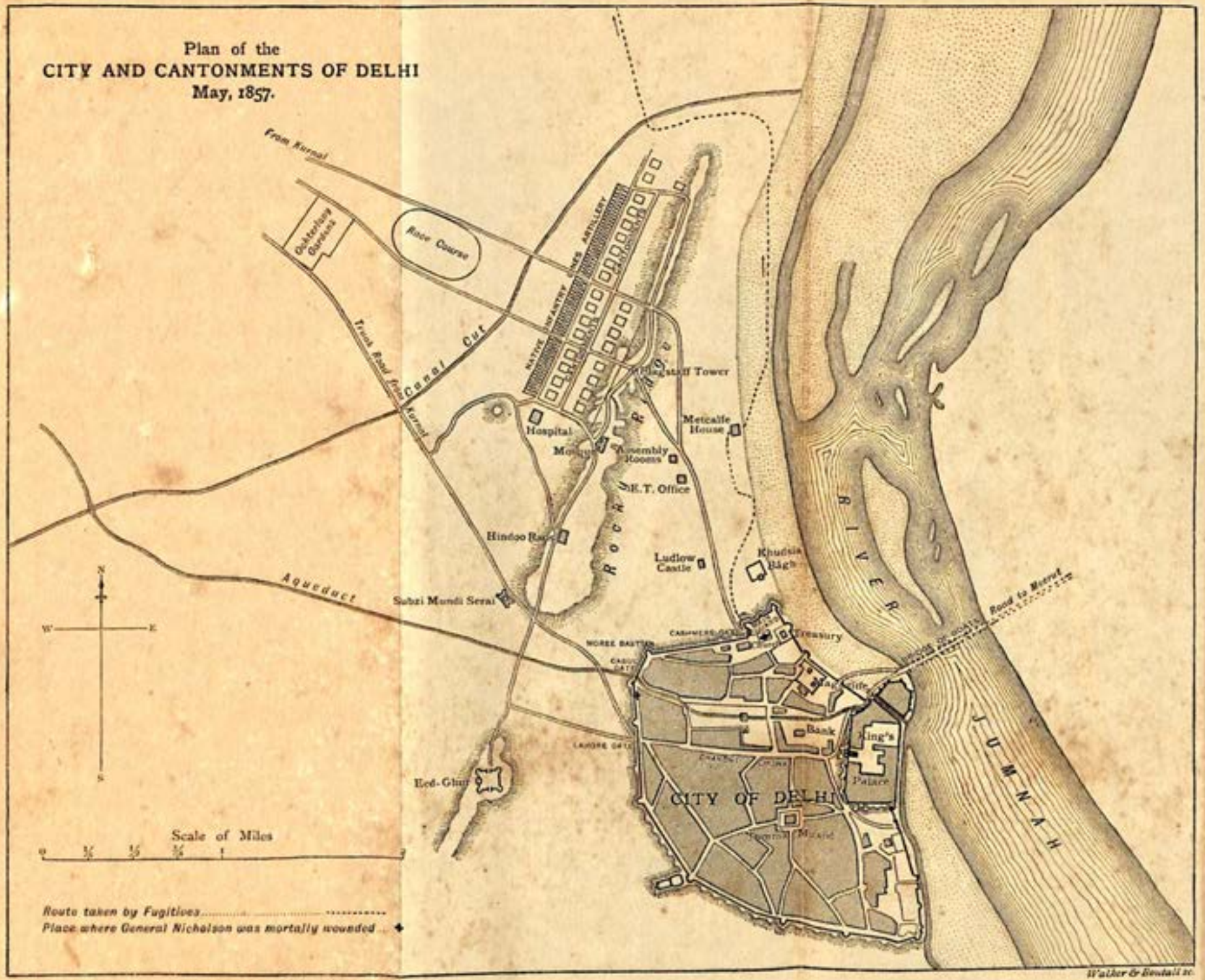
Plan of the
CITY AND CANTONMENTS OF DELHI
May, 1857.



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THE SEPOY MUTINY

AS SEEN BY A SUBALTERN:

FROM DELHI TO LUCKNOW.

CHAPTER I.

DELHI.

In a work recently published by Sir Hugh Gough, V.C., G.C.B., entitled "Old Memories," that distinguished officer has given a very interesting account of the outbreak of the great sepoy revolt at Meerut on the evening of May 10, 1857—the first station it will be recollected where the native troops of the Bengal Army broke out into open insurrection—and the subsequent unmolested march of the mutineers, flushed with triumph, to Delhi.

As I was at that time a young subaltern in

one of the native infantry regiments stationed at the latter place, and took an active part in many of the tragic events which happened inside the city of Delhi on the arrival there on the following morning of the mutinous soldiery from Meerut, it has occurred to me that an account of my personal recollections of that ever-memorable day May 11, 1857, may (apart from any interest which may attach to the narrative itself) form a fitting sequel to the sanguinary episode at Meerut, so graphically described by Sir Hugh Gough; and although it is true that upwards of forty years have passed over my head since their occurrence, still as the events I am about to relate were of a nature to make a very permanent impression on my memory, and I have also in my possession a number of letters which I wrote to my relatives in England at the time of the outbreak, carefully preserved by them ever since, I feel I am in a position to give a full and trustworthy description of all that took place, not only inside the city of Delhi, but also in the Delhi garrison itself. How my companions and I

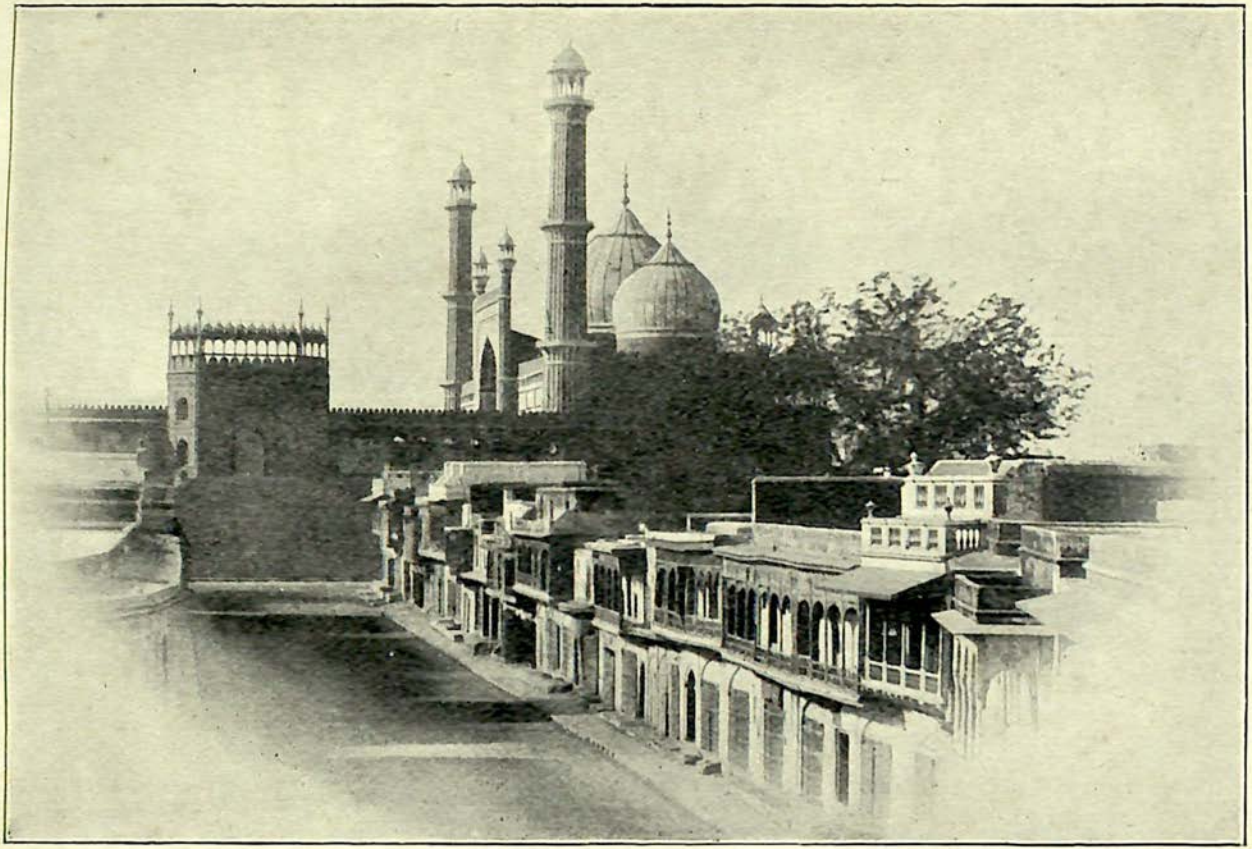
ever escaped with our lives on that occasion is no less a matter of exceeding wonder and astonishment to myself than it will be to those readers who care to peruse this narrative; and albeit a general outline of the sepoy insurrection at Delhi has long become a matter of historical record, yet, as many of the details connected therewith, as well as the story of the escape of our party of fugitives up to the time of final rescue by Lieutenants Gough and Mackenzie, have never hitherto been fully published, I am inclined to think that, notwithstanding the length of time which has since elapsed, they may still prove of general interest.

Before commencing my narrative, perhaps a short description of Delhi and its environs may not be amiss.

The modern city, as is well known, stands on the western or right bank of the river Jumna, and in the year 1857 numbered a resident native population of about 160,000, the majority being Mahomedans. There were also dwelling inside the city, some hundreds of Eurasians and native Christians, in addition to a large European

community, such as the missionaries and traders, civil engineers and clerks in government employ; but the number of official Europeans actually resident within the walls was inconsiderable, Captain Douglas, the commandant of the Palace Guards; the Reverend Mr. Jennings, the military chaplain, and a few conductors and sergeants attached to the Arsenal, usually called the "Magazine," being the only ones so far as I can recollect. The city itself is surrounded by a high loopholed wall between six and seven miles in circumference, strengthened by bastions with intervening martello towers and nine massive gates. Each of these gates is known by a distinct name, such as the Cashmere and Moree Gates on the northern face, the Lahore Gate on the western face, and so on; but as our story is mainly concerned with the first-named gate, a fuller description of this entrance to the city will be given later on. Round the entire extent of the walls is a wide and deep ditch, with a short glacis in front. So much for the fortifications.

The principal public edifices are the King's



THE JUMMA MUSJID.

Palace, and the Jumma Musjid, the latter reputed to be the largest and handsomest place of mussulman worship in India, whilst the former has been described by Heber as a kingly residence far surpassing in grandeur the Kremlin at Moscow.

At this period the titular throne of Delhi was occupied by His Majesty, Bahadur Shah, the octogenarian representative of the once mighty dynasty of the great Moghul; and here, within the walls of this magnificent building, surrounded by debauched and unscrupulous courtiers, and passing the chief portion of his time in the society of the ladies of his harem, he used to live with regal honours in the enjoyment of a pension of £120,000 per annum. Mention must also be made of the renowned Chandnee Chowk, or street of silver, the main thoroughfare of business in Delhi, which, commencing at the Lahore Gate, runs due east through the heart of the city to within a short distance of the imposing walls of red sand-stone sixty feet high, which encircle the King's Palace. Here precious stones, the

most exquisite embroidered shawls, and gold and silver ornaments of the finest workmanship, were procurable in abundance, and I fancy there were few cities in India at this period which could have rivalled the wealth of the bazaars of Delhi, or excelled the manufacturing skill of its inhabitants. On the north-east of the palace, and separated from it by a narrow branch of the Jumna, whose waters washed the base of its lofty walls, stood the old fort of Selimgurh. This fortress was connected with the palace by a bridge, but except for its commanding position, it was not such a formidable work as its appearance seemed to indicate, as it had been allowed to fall out of repair for many years past. Spanning the broad stream of the Jumna, close under the walls of this fort, was the bridge of boats, and stretching across the plain on the opposite bank, lined by a growth of shady trees, the broad metalled road to Meerut, distant thirty-six miles, could be clearly discerned.

The Arsenal, or Magazine, replete with vast stores of ammunition and muskets, besides two complete siege trains and innumerable field

guns, was also situated within the limits of the city walls, lining the river front close to the Calcutta Gate, but was not provided with a single European soldier to defend it. Close at hand were the spacious grounds of the Government College; next came the Civil Treasury, and further on the premises of the *Delhi Gazette Press*, at that time the leading newspaper in Upper India. In this locality also stood St. James' Church, fronting a large open space adjoining the Cashmere Gate and Main Guard.

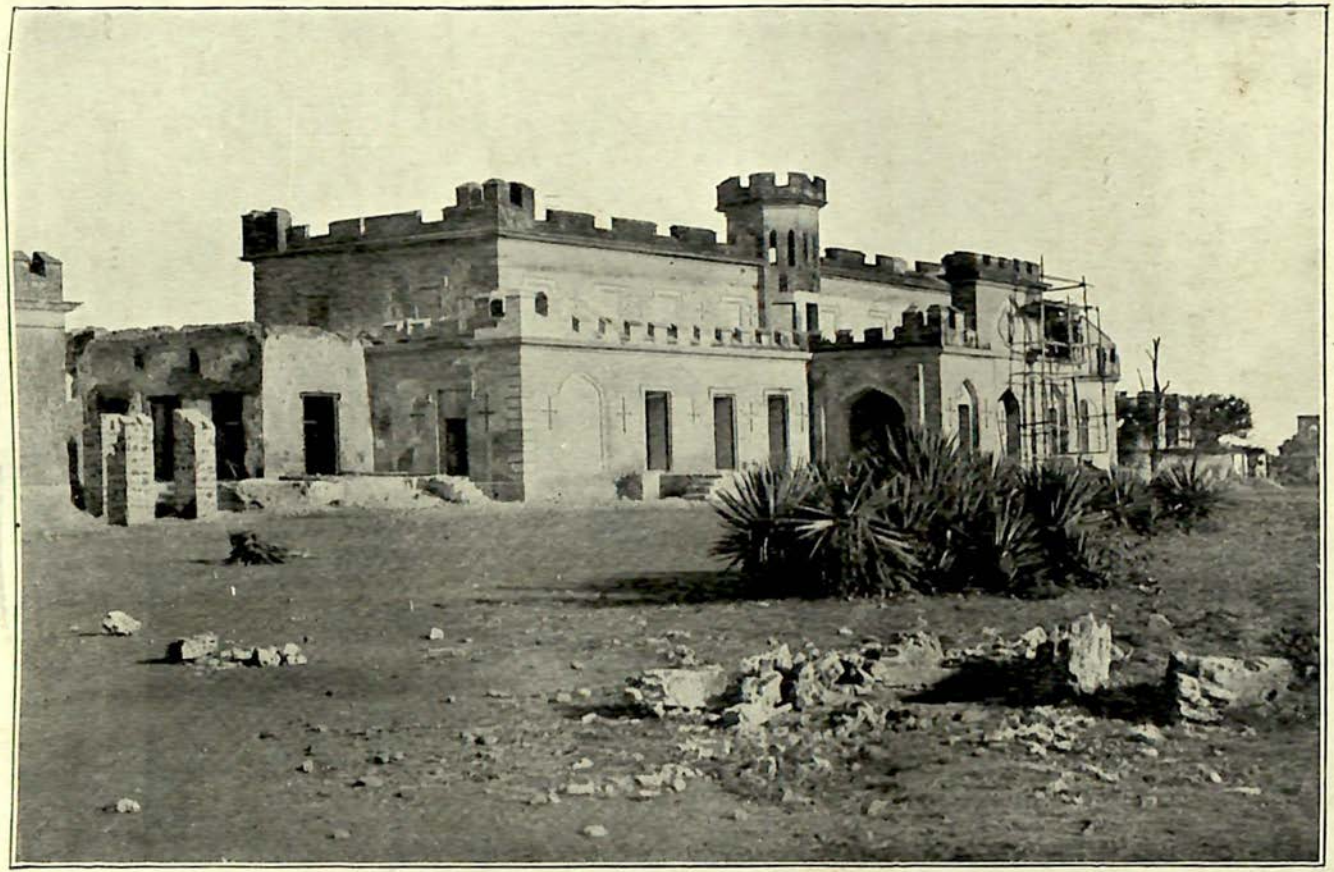
Having mentioned all the localities necessary for the main purpose of this narrative, so far as the interior of the city is concerned, it now becomes needful, in order that the several incidents connected with the outbreak may be thoroughly understood, to give a brief description of the military cantonments and their relative position to the city of Delhi.

These, roughly speaking, were situated about two miles to its north-west, and extended for about the same distance along the base of an elevated ridge of rocks, which latter, running obliquely to the city walls, formed the south-

eastern boundary of cantonments in that direction. The lines of the several sepoy regiments, together with a field battery of native artillery, which constituted the garrison, were built in one long line parallel to the ridge, and with their respective parade-grounds fronted north-west, a certain space between the lines and the foot of the ridge being reserved for the bungalows of the British officers. The right, or northern extremity of the cantonment, rested on the river Jumna, from which point it was distant from the city about three miles, whilst its left rear, which abutted on the above-mentioned rocky ridge opposite the Cabul Gate, was not much more than a mile from the city walls. Thus the mean distance from the city, as before stated, was about two miles. The north-west boundary of the cantonment was formed by a deep canal cutting, which, after running along the entire frontage of the station just beyond the regimental parade-grounds, took a slight bend to the right, and then fell into the river. There were several roads which led from different parts of cantonments towards the

city of Delhi, the two principal of which, passing over the crest of the ridge, united at a point some eight hundred yards below it, and thence proceeded in almost a straight line to the city, which it entered by way of the Cashmere Gate. On the river side of this road, and standing on its banks, was Metcalfe House, the residence of Sir T. Metcalfe, Bart., at that time joint-magistrate of Delhi, with its extensive park stretching for nearly a mile along the edge of the Jumna. Farther on, on the same side of the road, right up to the city walls, lay a number of suburban gardens, in the midst of which stood the Kudsiyá Bágh, the old summer palace of former Moghul sovereigns. These gardens were overgrown with thick shrubbery, and in many places were nothing more or less than a tangled mass of dense brushwood. The reader will do well to bear this fact in mind in order to clearly understand the narrative later on. On the other, or western side of the road, were a number of houses standing in their own grounds, inhabited for the most part by civilians and other non-military residents, the chief

amongst them being Ludlow Castle, a fine castellated mansion, the residence of Mr. Fraser, the Commissioner of Delhi. Not far from Ludlow Castle and nearer to the cantonment, was the electric telegraph office, and just beyond the latter, close to the junction of the roads above alluded to, were the assembly rooms and the shop of Mr. Marshal, the principal European merchant at Delhi. It only remains to add that the grand trunk road from Kurnaul and the Punjab lay a short distance to the west of cantonments, which, after passing through two and a half miles of suburbs and ancient edifices, entered the city through the Lahore Gate.



LUDLOW CASTLE.

CHAPTER II.

THE OUTBREAK.

And now, without further preliminary, I will venture to commence my story.

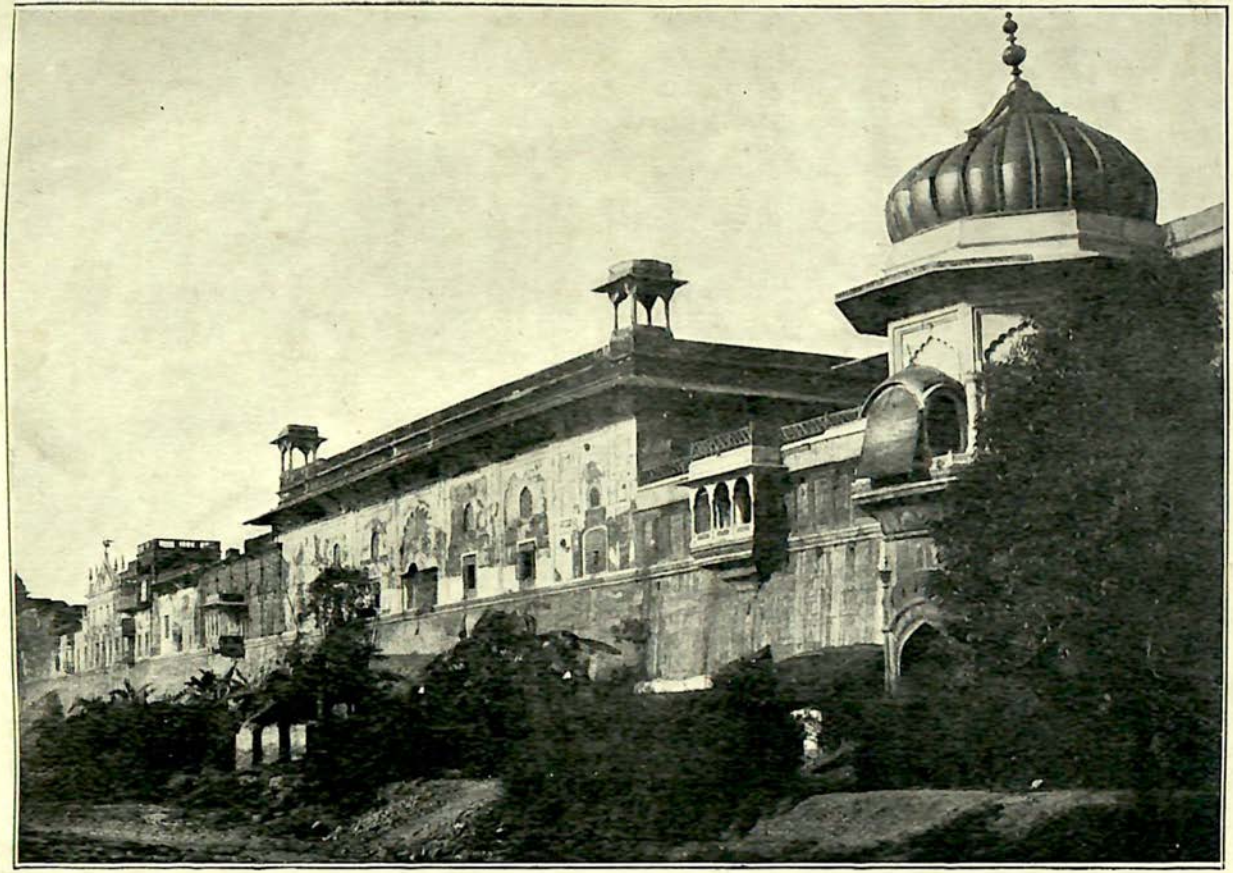
On the eventful morning of May 11, 1857, the whole of the troops composing the Delhi garrison, consisting of the 38th, 54th, and 74th regiments of native infantry, with Captain H. P. de Teissier's battery of native artillery, were assembled together on parade at an early hour, under the personal command of Brigadier Graves, commanding the station, for the purpose of hearing read out the general order relating to the execution of Issuree Pandy, a jemadar in one of the native infantry regiments at Barrackpore, who for gross insubordination and mutiny against the Government had been

condemned to be executed. This done, each corps returned to its respective parade-ground, and was then dismissed. The British officers of my own regiment (54th N.I.) for the most part repaired to the regimental mess-house, where, after partaking of a light breakfast, called in India *chota haziree*, and laughing and conversing together until nearly eight o'clock, we separated for the day and returned to our own houses. About an hour later the orderly havildar of my company came running up to my bungalow to report that the regiment had received orders to march down instantly to the city, as some troopers of the 3rd Light Cavalry had that morning arrived from Meerut, and were creating disturbances. Hurrying on my uniform, and ordering my pony to be saddled, I without loss of time galloped down to the parade-ground, where I found the regiment falling in by companies and preparing to start. Colonel Ripley, our commandant, who had not long previously been transferred from the 1st European Bengal Fusiliers to assume command of the regiment, and who

appeared much excited, was already there and giving directions. The Grenadiers and No. 1 (the latter my company) were ordered to proceed under the command of Major Paterson to the artillery lines, in order to escort a couple of guns to the city. We accordingly marched off at once; the rest of the regiment, with the band playing, followed shortly after. On arriving at the artillery lines, Major Paterson was informed by Captain de Teissier that the guns were not quite ready, but that if we proceeded quietly towards the city, they would overtake us at a gallop. Major Paterson, however, determined to wait. The regiment, meanwhile, with Colonel Ripley at their head, left us behind, and proceeded toward the Cashmere Gate and Main Guard.

Before proceeding further with my narrative, it would be as well to give a more detailed description of the Cashmere Gate, as this place was destined to be the scene of our operations for the remainder of this eventful day. This gate, like most fortified gates, is approached by two roadways cut through the glacis, one for

entry and the other for exit, each of which, passing under a separate arched entrance, leads into a small fortified enclosure, called the Main Guard, which was always garrisoned by a detachment of fifty sepoys under a European officer. It consisted on this day of men of the 38th N.I., under Lieutenant Procter of that corps. This duty, which was taken in turn by each regiment in the garrison, and lasted for a week at a time, was looked upon as a rather irksome one by the European officers, as the officer in command of the detachment was not allowed to quit the precincts of the Main Guard, and had always to be dressed in uniform. Mr. Plaice, the manager of the *Delhi Gazette*, who lived close by, I remember, used frequently to ask us subalterns to dine with him, and, as this was the only relaxation we were able to enjoy during our tour of duty, it was much appreciated by all, so much so, that one of the questions invariably asked by the relieving officer of his brother sub., before he marched back to cantonments, was, "How often did you dine with old Plaice?" But to return.



THE KING'S PALACE, DELHI—RIVER FRONT.

Running round the entire extent of the Main Guard was a low verandah, inside which were the quarters occupied by the sepoys; whilst on top of the bastion, which is ascended from below by means of a ramp, or sloping stone causeway, and situated immediately over the gateway, was a small two-roomed house, set apart for the British officer on duty. The distance of the Cashmere Gate from cantonments is about two miles, and, although not the nearest one to it, yet, as previously explained, the main road from the station to the city passed through this gate. From the Main Guard two other wooden gates afforded ingress to the native city, one leading direct to the Civil Treasury, whilst the other, passing into an open space where the church stands, continues thence in a straight line to the magazine and king's palace.

After a delay of about twenty minutes we were joined by the two guns, under the command of Lieutenant Wilson, and our two companies, with the guns, then proceeded on as fast as possible to the city. We were still

some distance off when the sound of musketry was distinctly heard; and now, as the church tower came in view, we could plainly see, from the smoke arising around it, that our regiment was actively engaged in that locality. Pushing on with all speed, we shortly after met Captain Wallace of the 74th N.I., the field officer of the week, coming out of the Cashmere Gate and riding back towards cantonments. He implored us for "God's sake" to hurry on as fast as possible, as all the 54th officers were being shot down by cavalry troopers, and their men were making no effort to defend them. On hearing this startling news, Major Paterson desired me to halt and load. The two guns then advanced through the gate, followed by the infantry. At this moment the body of our unfortunate colonel was carried out, literally hacked to pieces. One arm just below the shoulder was almost severed. Such a fearful sight I never beheld. The poor man was still alive, and, though scarcely able to articulate, I distinctly gathered from the few words he gasped out, that we had no chance against

the cavalry troopers, as our own men had turned against us. He was supported by Dr. Stewart, the garrison surgeon, who, it seems, had accompanied the regiment in his carriage to ascertain, if possible, what was occurring in the city. He was thereupon placed in Dr. Stewart's carriage, who at once drove back to cantonments.

I now entered the Main Guard, and found everything in confusion. On looking out into the open space in front of the church, a few cavalry troopers in their French-grey uniforms were seen galloping back in the direction of the palace. Lieutenant Wilson brought a gun round to bear on them, but they were out of sight before he had time to fire. As for the men of my own regiment, I could not imagine what had become of them. Not a sepoy was to be seen; they had all vanished. A consultation was now held to decide what was best to be done. At length it was determined to hold the Main Guard, and for this purpose the two guns were placed in position at the gate, which commanded the approach from the

palace and swept the open ground in front; some of our sepoys were drawn up in support, whilst others were sent to man the ramparts and bastion, and keep a sharp look-out on every side. I may here mention that the guard of the 38th N.I. on duty had, just before our arrival, refused to fire on the cavalry mutineers, when called upon to do so by Captain Wallace and Lieutenant Procter, in order to save the life of our poor colonel as he was being pursued and cut down right before their eyes. They even taunted these officers in mutinous language, and said that now the time had arrived to take their revenge on people who had tried, as they asserted, to subvert their caste and religion. Our position here, then, can easily be imagined to have been of an exceedingly precarious nature. At the moment, however, we scarcely realized its danger, our one anxiety being to find out the fate of our officers, who had preceded us with the main body of the regiment. At length some of us advanced beyond the inner gates, when the first thing I saw was the lifeless body of Captain Burrowes lying close

by the gate of the churchyard. Assisted by a couple of sepoys I carried him into the Main Guard and laid him on a *charpoy*. Other bodies were now observed scattered about the place. Five were at length found and brought in, also a sepoy shot through the arm. These were poor Burrowes, Smith, Edwards, and Waterfield, all of my own regiment. The fifth was one of the European sergeants attached to the corps; and he was the only one alive. A ball had shattered his leg, and he had another frightful wound on his head. Since then I have witnessed many painful sights, but I shall never forget my feelings that day as I saw our poor fellows being brought in, their faces distorted with all the agonies of a violent death, and hacked about in every conceivable way. Only a couple of hours previously we had been laughing and chatting together, utterly unconscious of the danger which threatened us; so their tragic and sudden death naturally produced a most depressing effect on our minds, and it instinctively occurred to us that it was only a question of a few hours, more or less, when

we, too, should share a similar fate and be numbered amongst the victims of the outbreak. But we had no time to indulge in sad reflections, for reports now reached us that, besides the 3rd Cavalry troopers, two regiments of native infantry, the 11th and 20th, had also arrived from Meerut, and were on the way to attack us.

This was alarming news, for, after the behaviour of our regiment in the morning, it could hardly be expected that the two companies still left would remain faithful. In fact, when I look back now on the events of that day, and remember how completely only a few hours later these men fraternized with the rest of their mutinous comrades, the only marvel is that with absolutely nothing to hinder them at this time they did not, there and then, in combination with the detachment of the 38th N.I. on duty at the Main Guard, openly join in the outbreak, and murder every European in the enclosure. Their hesitation, no doubt, to commit themselves at this period may be attributed partly to the fact that the regiment as a

body was not as yet wholly imbued with the spirit of disaffection, and partly to the feeling of uncertainty as to whether the British troops were not already on their way from Meerut to succour Delhi. Indeed, the sepoys themselves were very anxious to be informed on the latter point, and kept repeatedly inquiring when we thought the *Gora Log* (British soldiers) would arrive. To have shown any mistrust of their fidelity at such a moment, however, would have been fatal, so we kept speaking cheerfully to the men and assuring them of the certainty of troops coming to our aid ere long; in fact, we had no reason to doubt but that sooner or later assistance would be forthcoming, could we only hold out long enough.

In this state of disquieting suspense the first hour or so passed by, and we were speculating on the probable fate of the rest of the officers of the 54th, when, to my great joy, Lieutenant Osborn, our adjutant, and Captain Butler suddenly made their appearance. The latter was besmeared with blood, and was faint from a blow he had received on his head from a large

brickbat. We now learnt some particulars of the events of the morning. It appeared that no sooner had the regiment advanced through the Cashmere Gate into the open space in front of the church than they were assailed by about twenty troopers dressed in uniform. These men shouted out to the sepoys that they had no intention of hurting them, but had merely come to slaughter the accursed Feringhees. Our officers were then sabred and shot down. In vain did they call on their men to fire on the troopers: these miscreants, on the contrary, immediately joined with the insurgents, and some of the cowardly traitors actually bayoneted Colonel Ripley after he was unhorsed and cut down. In the midst of this confusion Osborn and Butler escaped down one of the streets; but here they were attacked by the populace, who came out with stones and bricks to assail them. Nevertheless, after passing through several streets and alleys, these two officers managed to escape outside the city walls, and thence made their way to us in safety. Shortly afterwards Angelo, our junior ensign, who had

only joined a few days previously, came running in also. His escape had been still more wonderful. On being attacked by the troopers, he, the Sergeant-Major, and Lieutenant Waterfield shut themselves up in a house. The door, however, was soon broken in, and they were obliged to rush out. The Sergeant-Major was instantly killed, and he lost poor Waterfield in the crowd; but Angelo succeeded somehow in slipping through, and after wandering about several by-lanes had at last found his way to the Main Guard. Dopping, our doctor, however, was still missing, and we never even recovered his body; but it is believed he was first shot in the back by one of our sepoys, and finally murdered by some 38th men.

Intimation was received about this time that Mr. Fraser, the Commissioner (who on hearing of the arrival of the mutineers in the morning had at once gone down to the palace), and Captain Douglas, the commandant of the Palace Guards, had both been murdered. Mr. Jennings, the chaplain, and his daughter, Miss Jennings, together with a friend, Miss Clifford, who was

residing with them inside the palace walls, we heard had also shared the same fate. In fact, it was evident that every European who came across the mutineers was immediately shot down and killed.

The day now was wearing on, and we were anxiously awaiting instructions from the Brigadier in cantonments, when about 1 p.m. we were reinforced by 150 men of the 74th N.I., under Major Abbott, and two more guns under Lieutenant Aislabie. Their arrival was hailed with delight; and now, to make the state of affairs look brighter still, and to our no small surprise, some two hundred of the men of my regiment who had so treacherously disappeared in the morning, abandoning their officers to their fate, entered the Main Guard, bringing the regimental colours with them. From their statements it appeared that the onslaught of the cavalry troopers had been so sudden and unexpected, and they were so totally unprepared (their muskets not even being loaded, owing to our poor Colonel thinking the bayonet would be enough for all purposes) that they

were seized with panic in the confusion that ensued, and had separated in all directions. They further added that they had been tampered with by the insurgents, but had refused to listen to their overtures. How far this was true it was impossible to judge; but there is no denying that we all felt a good deal cheered by their return, and really began to hope that matters might not, after all, turn out so bad as we had anticipated at first.

It may be mentioned that although the demeanour of the men at this time was outwardly respectful, I noticed that they stood about in groups talking to each other in an undertone, and I overheard one young sepoy of my company distinctly refuse to go on sentry on the bastion when ordered to do so. I at once went up to him, and laying my hand on his musket, said I would take the duty myself, thinking to shame him out of what I then imagined was his cowardice; but he roughly disengaged himself and slunk back into the crowd. All this was very disquieting, and boded no good. On another occasion an officer asked a non-commissioned

officer why the native troops at Meerut had risen in rebellion against the *Sirkar* (Government), on which he replied, "Why not? the Commander-in-Chief is up at Simla, eating his dinners, and pays no heed to our complaints." Whether he was referring to the greased cartridges, or to the withdrawal of certain highly-prized privileges accorded to sepoys in the civil courts of Oudh previous to its annexation, or the recently published orders of the Government of India, by which general service beyond the seas was made compulsory for all future recruits in the Native Army, it is quite impossible to say; but it was evident from his reply that the men's minds were rankling under some fancied sense of injustice, and that they had not the slightest intention of making any effort to defend us in the event of being attacked by the insurgents from Meerut.

During the course of the day several ladies and other Europeans who lived inside the city, and had escaped being murdered in the early part of the morning, had come to us for protection. Amongst these were Mrs. Forrest and

her three daughters, Mrs. Fraser, and others. Most of them had experienced hairbreadth escapes; some had hidden in the servants' houses whilst their bungalows were being looted and set on fire by the city rabble, whilst others, less fortunate than themselves, were savagely cut to pieces by the infuriated mutineers ere they could quit their burning houses. Prominent among those ruthlessly massacred were Mr. Beresford, the manager of the Delhi Bank, his wife, and entire family. On the premises being rushed by the insurgents it was reported that these poor people, accompanied by a few clerks, had ascended to the upper balcony of the house, where, after a gallant and desperate resistance, they were all eventually overpowered, and not one of the party escaped. All those ladies who had taken refuge with us naturally remained in the utmost state of alarm and perturbation, and as we had no means of sending them to cantonments they were forced to remain in the densely crowded enclosure of the Main Guard throughout the scorching heat of the day, without food or sustenance of any kind. Later

on, one or two officers came down from cantonments to ascertain, if possible, the movements of the mutineers; but we could tell them nothing. Not a soul would bring us any information, though Major Abbott offered to reward handsomely any one who would go out and bring back news. We could see, however, from the dense pillars of smoke which now and again shot up into the air from the direction of the city, that numberless houses had been fired, and great destruction of property was going on. The magazine was, we knew, still held by a few Europeans under Lieutenant Willoughby, for they repeatedly sent to us for assistance; but we were powerless to aid them. Not a sepoy would leave the precincts of the Main Guard. The church was plundered under our very eyes, the cushions and stools even being borne off by the rascally populace without let or hindrance. I must not omit to mention here that we were throughout the day in constant communication with Mr. Galloway, of the Civil Service, in charge of the Government Treasury. He had armed himself with a drawn sword, and informed

us that the sepoy guard over the treasure were in a decidedly mutinous condition, and would not obey orders. He evidently appeared to think that sooner or later we should all be massacred, but refused to abandon his charge; and eventually this brave man, I regret to say, was killed at his post.

It was about this time that Major Abbott, observing the bodies of our unfortunate officers who had been killed in the morning's encounter with the cavalry troopers, lying in a corner of the Main Guard, suggested the propriety of sending them back to cantonments. The only conveyance available was an open bullock cart, so after placing the bodies inside, and covering them over with the skirts of some ladies' dresses, procured from a house just outside the enclosure, which, judging from the smashed condition of the furniture, and the quantity of miscellaneous property strewn about the floors, had evidently been broken into and pillaged by the city rabble, in the course of the early morning, the driver was despatched upon his errand.*

* Lord Roberts, in his "Forty-one Years in India," has

It seems, however, the cart was taken straight to the Flagstaff Tower on the ridge, where its arrival with its ghastly burden naturally produced a terrifying effect on the ladies and other residents of cantonments, who, on hearing of the advent of the Meerut mutineers, and their sanguinary proceedings in the city, had congregated at this central spot for mutual advice and protection. The bullocks, meanwhile, were unharnessed and taken away, the cart with the four dead bodies being left on the ridge within a short distance of the Tower.

In connection with this incident it may be here mentioned that when the British force, under Sir Henry Bernard, took possession of the ridge on the 8th June, after defeating the rebels at Badli-ka-Serai, this cart with the

characterized this as an "inhuman" act; but the fact is the bodies were sent to cantonments (not especially to the tower), in order that they might be decently cared for; nor was it foreseen that ere night closed in the station would be abandoned to the rebel soldiery and the residents in full flight for Kurnaul and Meerut. In any case I submit the course adopted was preferable to allowing the dead bodies to remain heaped up in a corner of the Main Guard, exposed to the sun's rays and in view of all in that confined and densely crowded enclosure.

skeletons of our unfortunate officers still in it, was found by the troops on the identical spot where it had been left, the regimental buttons on the white uniforms removing all doubts as to the identity of the bodies.*

These were at once interred on the ridge near the Flagstaff Tower, and after the close of the siege, an iron railing was placed round the spot, with a stone in the centre, indicating the names of the four officers, and the date and manner of their death.

CHAPTER III.

PANIC IN CANTONMENTS.

At this period of my narrative it is necessary to revert for a few moments to cantonments in order to place ourselves in possession of what had occurred there since the receipt of the news of the arrival of the mutineers from Meerut, and the prompt despatch of the 54th to the city to confront them.

As soon as information had reached the Brigadier of the disgraceful conduct of the 54th N.I., and of the murder of our officers, the whole of the troops were turned out. Different parties of the 38th and 74th were sent to occupy the principal roads leading from the city, and the Brigadier himself, with a strong detachment and two guns, took up a central position at the

Flagstaff Tower, situated on the top of the ridge of rocks behind which the cantonment lies. To this tower, as the only post where any resistance could possibly be made, the whole of the ladies in the station, accompanied by their families, together with the European merchants and other residents, had flocked, involving the whole place in a general confusion, without anybody to guide or enforce orders. Although the tower itself was a weak position and unsuitable for prolonged defence, it was considered that in case of matters coming to the worst a stand might be made here until succour arrived from Meerut, for there was every reason to hope that with so large a force of British troops at that station it was only a question of a few hours before relief would arrive. The sepoys themselves appeared to be in the greatest state of insubordination, and were observed collected here and there in groups, talking amongst themselves, and evidently much excited. Indeed, the men of the 38th N.I. were overheard to say that, in the event of a single shot being fired, they would immediately turn on the Europeans

and murder every one. Their attention, moreover, appeared to be directed towards getting possession of Captain de Teissier's guns, and that officer was constantly employed in preventing them from being mobbed.

The confused state of panic which prevailed in cantonments will be more fully understood from the following extract from a letter written by the wife of an officer of the Delhi garrison, and as it also touches on certain incidents mentioned in the course of this narrative, and gives some interesting particulars of poor Colonel Ripley after he was taken back to cantonments from the Cashmere Gate, it would be as well to quote it in this place.

"My husband, child, and myself were spending our last week in India with Dr. Wood and his wife, as we were to have proceeded to Calcutta on the 15th of May, and every arrangement had been made for our journey, even to the *dâk* being paid; but, alas! we were astonished at hearing from the native doctor, who came to make his usual report regarding the sick to Dr. Wood, the alarming tidings that the mutineers had actually been allowed to pass over the bridge of boats, and were then within the city walls. It was reported

that within the short space of one hour, the insurgents had killed the commissioner, Mr. Fraser; the fort-adjutant, Captain Douglas; the Rev. Mr. Jennings and his daughter, a young lady about nineteen years of age; together with many others, whose names I do not remember. The above was being related to us when we received a message from Mrs. Paterson, the wife of Major Paterson, of the 54th Regiment of Native Infantry, to beg us to go over to her house quickly; and as she only lived across the road we went immediately. In the verandah we met Major Paterson, dressed in uniform, from whom we heard that his regiment had been ordered down to the city of Delhi to quell the disturbance, and we shortly after saw them pass the house, and from their cheerful appearance, and determined look, we congratulated ourselves on having such a brave set of fellows, as we thought, to go forward and fight for us. Meanwhile, we were advised to go forthwith to the 38th hospital, and there find protection through the guard stationed there; so we all three ladies started in Mrs. Paterson's carriage, taking with us her two little girls and my own dear boy. On reaching the hospital, we were told that all the ladies had taken refuge in the Flagstaff Tower, and that we had better go likewise. The native doctor of the 38th took me to his house, and told me that if I was frightened he could hide me in an underground room which he showed me; but I felt more secure by going to the Flagstaff Tower. Here on arrival we were told that poor Colonel Ripley was lying at the bells of arms, dreadfully wounded. We proceeded

immediately to the place where he lay, to see if we could render him any assistance. We found him lying on a bed of very rough manufacture, and a sergeant's wife brought us a nice soft *rezaie* (quilt), which we folded once or twice double, and laid him upon it. This appeared to comfort his wounds, and after we had applied some lavender-water to his temples he seemed much better, and talked to us. He was, of course, in great agony, and begged of the native doctor to give him a dose of opium to deaden his sufferings, and, after some persuasion, the doctor did so. The colonel was then so much better, that he pointed to one frightful wound in his left shoulder, and told us that the men of his own regiment had bayoneted him. We were afraid to remain longer with the colonel, having our own little ones to protect, and therefore bade him farewell, promising, as I did, to go to our house and persuade my husband, who was himself very ill, to see to his wants. On our way we met men and women-servants in every direction, looking dreadfully confused, and apparently greatly concerned for us. Before we reached home, another wounded man, a sergeant, I believe, of the 54th, who had been shot in the leg, was being carried to the hospital in a dhooly. On reaching home, our servants begged of us not to remain in the house, for it was fully understood that the bungalows were to be burnt at night. Thinking, however, we might save our clothes, and other little articles which for years past I had been gathering together, Mrs. Wood and I packed our boxes, and ordered our servants to hide them in the

fowl-house, and we took our jewel-cases with us. When we left the bungalow it was about two o'clock p.m. We took the road to the Flagstaff Tower; and my husband went to the bells of arms to see what he could do for Colonel Ripley, whom he soon removed from that place into a dhooly, and rode by his side to the Flagstaff. The colonel was quite sensible, for he asked my husband to secure all his papers from his house for him, which my husband did. By this time the people at the Flagstaff were in a great state of alarm, having heard that the King of Delhi, instead of aiding us, was sending ladders for the sepoys to scale the walls of the Magazine, and numbers of gentlemen and merchants from the city, assisted by several ladies, were bringing in boxes upon boxes of powder, caps, and bullets, which were all being lodged at the top of the Tower. Our alarm was still further intensified when a cart drawn by bullocks shortly after arrived at the Flagstaff, which it was whispered contained the bodies of the unfortunate officers, who had been so brutally killed in the city. The cart was covered over with one or two ladies' dresses, to screen the dead from view; but one of their arms was distinctly noticed by myself as it was hanging over the side of the cart. Some now advised leaving for Kurnaul, a distance of about seventy miles from Delhi; but several ladies present declaimed against going, as their husbands had been absent since the morning. Alas! one or two of these ladies were then widows, although they knew it not. One young lady, whose poor brother was lying in the cart outside the

Flagstaff, was inquiring of several of the officers if they had seen him, she little thinking that he was numbered among the dead. Every minute things bore a blacker look, as the 38th Sepoys, whose muskets were piled on the ridge, began calling out, *Deen! deen!* (religion! religion!), and were with difficulty restrained from flying to their arms; and when, later on, Captain de Teissier, the Artillery Commandant, came in with his trousers covered with blood, and told his wife, who was sitting next to me with a young babe in her arms, that his charger had been shot under him, and that she ought to be most thankful that his life had been spared, we fully realized that if we depended upon our sepoys for assistance we should be but poorly cared for, . . . but it was not until night was fast closing in that the bugle at last sounded the retreat." *

* For an interesting account of this lady's escape from Delhi, see Appendix A.

CHAPTER IV

THE EXPLOSION AT THE MAGAZINE.

Having described the state of uncertainty and alarm prevailing in cantonments, we must now return once more to the Main Guard, where the final act of the tragedy was soon to take place. About 4 p.m. guns were heard booming in the direction of the Magazine, but no one could conjecture what had happened. We were not long, however, kept in suspense, for after some thirty rounds had been fired in rapid succession, a terrific explosion rent the air, shaking the foundations of the Main Guard to its centre. Bugles were blown, the assembly sounded, and all was confusion and dismay, everybody rushing here and there, some pacifying the ladies, others trying to get the men together, none of us

knowing what to make of it. Presently a dense column of smoke and dust ascended to an immense height, and we rightly guessed that the Magazine was blown up. A few minutes subsequent to the explosion Lieutenant Willoughby, the Commissary of Ordnance in charge of the Magazine, and Lieutenant Forrest, his assistant, made their appearance, the former begrimed with dust and powder, and the latter badly wounded in the hand from a musket-ball. From them we learnt the particulars of their defence of the Magazine—a defence which, perhaps, it is no exaggeration to say has scarcely a parallel in history. But I cannot do better than relate it in the words of Lieutenant Forrest himself, on whom, in consequence of the lamented murder of his chief, the heroic Lieutenant George Willoughby, whilst escaping across country to Meerut, devolved the task of writing the official report of this magnificent exploit for the information of the authorities.

"On the morning of May 11, between 7 and 8 a.m., Sir Theophilus Metcalfe, the joint-magistrate, came over, and requested me to accompany him to the

LIEUTENANT GEORGE WILLOUGHBY, BENGAL ARTILLERY.

(Reproduced, by kind permission of his niece, Miss Wallace, from a photograph of an unfinished water-colour drawing, taken about 1857.)

Magazine for the purpose of having two guns placed on the bridge of boats, in order to prevent the mutineers from Meerut from crossing over. On our arrival at the Magazine we found that Willoughby and Raynor, and the whole of the establishment, both European and native, were already there. Willoughby, Sir T. Metcalfe, and myself went at once to a small bastion on the river face, which commanded a full view of the bridge, and we could distinctly see the mutineers marching over in open column, headed by the cavalry. A body of the cavalry had previously taken possession of the Delhi side of the bridge. Sir T. Metcalfe, on seeing this, went off with Willoughby to ascertain if the City Gate was closed. This was, however, a useless precaution, as the mutineers were at once admitted into the palace, through which they passed cheering. On Willoughby's return the gates of the Magazine were closed and barricaded, and every arrangement made for a vigorous defence of some hours at least. Inside the gate leading to the park we placed two six-pounders double charged with grape, one under Sub-conductor Crow, the other under Sergeant Stewart, who stood by them with lighted matches in their hands. Their orders were that if any attempt was made to force that gate both guns were to be fired at once, and they were to fall back on that part of the Magazine where Willoughby and myself were posted. The principal gate of the Magazine was similarly defended by two guns, with *chevaux de frise* laid down on the outside. For the further defence of this gate, and the Magazine near it, two six-pounders

were so placed as either to command the gate or a small bastion in its vicinity. Within sixty yards, in front of the office and commanding two cross-roads, were three six-pounders and one twenty-four-pounder (howitzer), which could be so managed as to act upon any part of the Magazine in that neighbourhood. All these guns were loaded with double charges of grape. Arms were now placed in the hands of the native establishment. They took them reluctantly, and it soon appeared that they were not only in a state of excitement, but also of insubordination, particularly the Mussulman portion, for they flatly refused to obey the orders issued by the Europeans. After the above arrangements had been made a train was laid communicating with the powder magazine, and ready to be fired by a preconcerted signal, which was that of Conductor Buckley raising his hat from his head on the order being given by Willoughby.

"Hardly had the above arrangements been completed when the guards from the palace came, and demanded possession of the Magazine in the name of the King of Delhi. To this no reply was made, and immediately after the Subadar of the native infantry guard on duty came and informed Willoughby and myself that the king had sent down word to the mutineers that he would without delay send them down scaling ladders from the palace for the purpose of scaling the wall; and shortly afterwards they arrived. On these being erected against the walls the whole of our native establishment deserted us by climbing up the sloped

sheds on the inside, and descending the ladders on the outside. The enemy now appeared in great numbers on the wall. We opened a fire of grape on them, and kept it up as long as a single round remained. Every shot went crashing through them and told well."

* * * * *

"I am in duty bound to bring to the notice of the major-general the gallantry of Conductors Buckley and Scully on this trying occasion. The former, assisted only by myself, loaded and fired in rapid succession the several guns above detailed, firing at least four rounds from each gun, and with the same steadiness as if standing on parade, although the enemy were then some hundreds in number, and kept up a continuous fire of musketry on us from within forty or fifty yards. After firing the last round Conductor Buckley received a ball in his right arm, and I at the same time was struck in the left hand by two musket-balls, which disabled me for a time.

"It was at this critical moment that Lieutenant Willoughby gave the signal for firing the Magazine. Conductor Scully, who had from the first evinced his gallantry by volunteering for this dangerous duty, now coolly and calmly, without hesitation, and yet without confusion, set fire to the several trains. In an instant, and with an explosion that shook the city and was heard distinctly at Meerut, the Magazine blew up. The wall was thrown flat upon the ground, and it is said that some hundreds of the enemy were buried under the ruins or blown into the air. Strange to say,

half of that gallant band emerged alive from amidst the ruins, blackened, singed, and wounded, it is true; but that they escaped at all cannot be more a matter of surprise to others than it is to themselves. Lieutenants Willoughby and Forrest reached the Cashmere Gate together. The latter has reached Meerut in safety; the former is said to have been murdered in a village whilst on his way to the same place. He was a gallant soldier and did his duty well.

"It does not detract in the least from the merits of this gallant defence that the blowing up of the Magazine did not prevent large quantities of stores from falling into the hands of the enemy. It was not a precautionary measure, but a deed of defiance and daring. No preparations had been made. They met in the Magazine as usual, and when the mutineers came, they said, 'We will hold it till the reinforcements from Meerut arrive, for they must be close at hand, or we will die bravely at our posts.' In vain did they look for succour, and they determined to do what they could to damage the enemy at the risk of their lives. Numbers of the enemy were slain by the explosion, and it was a great service even in the stores it did destroy. And was not a noble example here shown? Such deeds are never in vain. And thus did nine British men defend the Fort of Delhi."

CHAPTER V.

BLOODSHED AND FLIGHT.

Shortly after the arrival of Lieutenants Willoughby and Forrest, some sergeants and conductors who had assisted in the defence of the magazine entered the Main Guard in a more or less disabled condition, and a company of the 74th, under Captain Gordon, was sent out to see if any more could be rescued. These men, however, after proceeding a short distance, refused to advance farther, and Captain Gordon was obliged to retrace his steps. About this period an order came from the Brigadier recalling Major Abbott's detachment and the two guns under Lieutenant Aislabie. On receipt of this order Major Paterson, Mr. de Gruyther [the Deputy-Collector], and several others strongly remonstrated against its being

carried into effect; for it was obvious that if the 74th left it would have been impossible to hold the post against any attack, as it was evident that our men were not to be trusted, and our confidence in them was utterly shaken. Major Abbott, however, contended that having received a specific order, he could not but obey it. The Deputy-Collector on this begged for a short delay, saying he would himself ride up to cantonments and point out to the Brigadier the necessity of the 74th remaining at the Cashmere Gate. The two guns meanwhile, under Lieutenant Aislabie, proceeded back to cantonments in obedience to orders. On their reaching the cross-road which leads direct to the Flagstaff Tower, Captain de Teissier sounded the bugle for them to go up and join him, but as this signal was not noticed he mounted his horse and galloped after them. Meanwhile the guns had neared a portion of the ridge where a picket of the 38th Native Infantry was posted, who no sooner saw them approach than they fired several shots at Lieutenant Aislabie, forcing him to ride for his life, and then, seizing the guns,

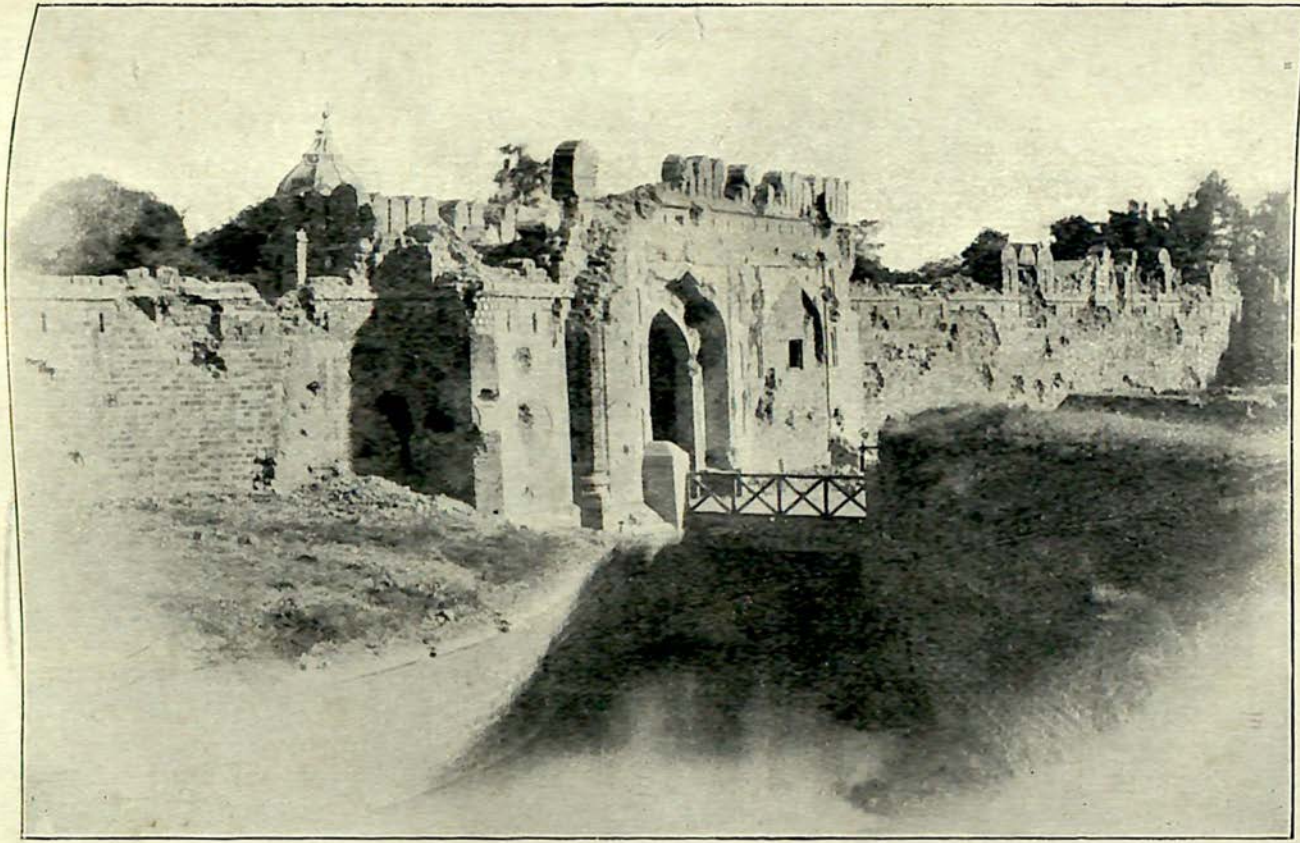
leisurely marched off to the Cashmere Gate. At this moment Captain de Teissier coming up, ordered them to halt; but the only reply was a volley from the sepoys, which wounded his horse in three places. He himself, however, luckily escaping untouched, galloped back to the Flagstaff Tower, where, after carrying him back in safety, the poor animal fell and died. The two guns now, together with the 38th Sepoys, who had taken possession of them, proceeded on their way, and in due course arrived at the Cashmere Gate. On seeing them re-enter the Main Guard without an officer we were all greatly astonished, and on Major Abbott asking the drivers why they had returned, they gave some evasive reply. Meanwhile several of the 38th Sepoys kept entering the enclosure in parties of threes and fours, and we could observe our men getting very restless and uneasy.

Some time having now elapsed since the departure of the Deputy-Collector on his errand to the Brigadier, Major Abbott determined to wait no longer. He accordingly fell-in the 74th detachment, ordering at the same time the two

guns, which had just returned, to follow him out of the Main Guard. The order to march was then given, when, thinking it would be a good opportunity of getting the ladies who had taken shelter with us up to cantonments, we began assisting them on to one of the gun wagons. At this critical juncture, and just as Major Abbott had passed through the Cashmere Gate with about half his men, and the guns were about to follow, some of the 38th Sepoys rushed at the gate and closed it; their next act was to discharge a volley right amongst a group of officers, and their example was, as far as I could see, rapidly followed by all the other sepoys inside the enclosure. A scene now ensued that baffles description, and of which I can convey but a faint idea. Almost at the first discharge I saw Captain Gordon fall from his horse; a musket-ball had pierced his body, and he fell without a groan within a few feet of where I was standing. The next moment I saw Miss Forrest hastily dismount from the gun wagon on which she was seated and jump across his prostrate body. It seems some sepoys had advanced towards

her in a threatening manner, and, shooting a wounded conductor, who was sitting by her side, dead on the spot, had compelled her to alight. The horrible truth now flashed on me—we were being massacred right and left without any means of escape! Scarcely knowing what I was doing, I made for the ramp which leads from the courtyard to the bastion above. Every one appeared to be doing the same. Twice I was knocked over as we all frantically rushed up the slope, the bullets whistling past us like hail, and flattening themselves against the parapet with a frightful hiss. To this day it is a perfect marvel to me how any one of us escaped being hit. Poor Smith and Reveley, both of the 74th, were killed close beside me. The latter was carrying a loaded gun, and, raising himself with a dying effort, he discharged both barrels into a knot of sepoys, and the next moment expired. Osborn, of my own corps, was shot through the thigh as he ran up scarcely two paces in front of me, and every second I expected to feel a bullet through my own body as well.

The embrasures of the bastion were at length reached, and into these we all crowded. Some officers leaped without hesitation into the ditch, a drop of some twenty-five feet, and then scrambled up the counterscarp. Amongst these I noticed Lieutenants Willoughby, Butler, and Angelo. Poor Osborn's look of despair I shall never forget, as he bound up the wound in his leg with a handkerchief, and then dropped off the parapet into the ditch. I heard him shout out to us to follow, and the next moment I saw him climbing the opposite bank. Myself and the rest were in the act of following his example, when despairing cries for help were heard proceeding from some ladies, who had taken shelter in the officers' quarters, situated on the top of the bastion. Running back at once, we found them in a state bordering on distraction, and the Misses Forrest were weeping over their mother, who had been shot through the shoulder. The bullets all this while came whistling in through the windows of the house, and delay was hazardous in the extreme. Looking out of an aperture, I could



CASHMERE GATE AND BASTION, AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT.

see that the majority of the sepoys were running out of the gate which conducts to the Treasury, so Wilson of the Artillery, thinking there was possibly a chance of our being able to descend to the courtyard and effect our escape by means of the Cashmere Gate, went out to reconnoitre. A bullet through his cap, however, caused him to beat a hasty retreat, and it was then seen that a number of sepoys still remained in the enclosure, some of whom commenced pointing the guns in our direction. We were at a loss what to do. To take the ladies into the ditch and scale the counterscarp seemed an impossibility; to stay longer in our present position was to court certain destruction. Words are unable to express adequately the agonizing suspense of that moment; all chance of escape seemed utterly cut off. Instinctively we all rushed out and crowded once more round an embrasure; all at once, bang went a gun in the courtyard below, and the same instant a round shot passed within a few feet of our heads, expediting our movements in no small degree. Quick as lightning we fastened

our sword-belts together; some then jumped into the ditch, whilst others remained above to assist the ladies to descend. One by one they were dropped in this manner over the parapet, those below catching them in their arms to break the fall as much as possible. One very stout old lady, whose name I did not know then, but afterwards ascertained to be Mrs. Forster, commenced to scream, and refused to jump. At this instant another shot from the gun crashed into the parapet a little to the right, covering us with splinters. It was madness to waste time in expostulation; somebody gave her a push, and she tumbled headlong into the ditch beneath. And now an almost perpendicular bank rose before us, to scale which with delicate ladies appeared a hopeless task indeed. Meanwhile a few sepoys were observed peering over the rampart; but, as we instantly took cover by retreating close to the inner wall, or "escarp," it was impossible for them to depress their muskets sufficiently to shoot us. After a short while of extreme suspense their heads disappeared, and we

surmised they must have gone with the rest of their comrades to join in plundering the Treasury, from which direction the sound of firing now came. With beating hearts we commenced the ascent of the counterscarp. Again and again did the ladies almost reach the top, when the earth, crumbling away beneath their feet, sent them rolling back into the ditch. Despair, however, gave us superhuman energy, till at length we all succeeded in gaining the summit. We now quickly ran down the short glacis, and plunged into some thick shrubbery that grew at the bottom. Here we stopped to take breath; but the sound of voices proceeding from the high road, which ran close by, induced us to hurry off again as fast as possible. It was evident, however, that the powers of endurance of poor Mrs. Forster, the stout old lady to whom I have already alluded, were fast failing. She had been grazed by a bullet in the temple, and the severe fall she experienced in tumbling head foremost from the parapet into the ditch had partially stunned her. Every effort was made to rouse her, but

without success. As a last resource, two of the strongest of our party attempted to carry her; but, being now in a state of collapse, her enormous weight rendered such a feat impossible, especially as the belt of brushwood through which we were forcing a passage was overgrown with thorny bushes and thick underwood, without a semblance of a pathway. In the meantime those in front had advanced some distance through the thicket, and the two officers in immediate attendance on the poor lady were left in the rear. Finding at length that she had become unconscious, and that their united efforts to carry her were unavailing, they were reluctantly compelled to leave her where she fell. Truly it was a most sad predicament; but I think there is little doubt, from the statements of those who last saw her, that the unfortunate woman's life was practically beyond human aid, and that she never afterwards regained consciousness. May God rest her soul!

On emerging from the brushwood, through which we had made our way with the utmost

difficulty, we found ourselves approaching the outskirts of Sir T. Metcalfe's extensive domain, which on one side stretches down to the banks of the Jumna, and on the other is bounded by the main road connecting cantonments with the city. And now the question occurred as to which way we should bend our steps. Some suggested we should make for cantonments; others, again, argued that as in all probability the mutineers were now in full occupation there, we should only sacrifice our lives by doing so. Finally we made for the river-bank, hoping to reach Sir T. Metcalfe's house by that route, where we anticipated both food and shelter might be obtained. But on reaching the river bank we observed to our dismay that a number of natives were tracking us, and we gave up ourselves for lost. Not waiting, however, to take a second look, we set off running, hoping to reach the house before our pursuers overtook us.

On we went over rough and uneven ground, covered with thick shrubs and thorny bushes, which tore the ladies' dresses to shreds, the

perspiration streaming down our faces, our lips parched with thirst, and not daring to look behind us. The sun by this time had set, and the short summer evening in India began to close in. In about ten minutes we reached the long drive leading to the house, and shortly after arrived in front of it. Here we perceived the house to be surrounded by a crowd of suspicious-looking individuals, and once more our hopes died away within us. We experienced, however, no molestation, and some of the servants, on perceiving us, came up and addressed us civilly. One khidmutgar, I well recollect, appeared much distressed at the probable fate of his master, whom he had not seen since he left the house in the early morning. This man conducted us down a narrow flight of steps into some underground apartments, where, desiring us to remain, he went to fetch some victuals. It was pitch-dark in this apartment, and some of the party were so exhausted with fatigue that, utterly heedless of the perils which enveloped us, they lay down on the damp hard floor and fell fast asleep. Presently

METCALFE'S HOUSE, AFTER THE SIEGE.

the khidmutgar returned with another servant, bringing candles and food. He then fetched several bottles of beer, which the reader can imagine how we enjoyed. After finishing this repast and resting some three hours we determined to leave our place of concealment and sally forth, more especially as the servants kept warning us that the sepoys might at any moment come to plunder the premises, in which case we must inevitably be discovered and killed. It will be as well here to enumerate our party. The ladies we had brought with us from the Main Guard consisted of Mrs. Forrest and her three daughters, the youngest a sweet little girl of nine years of age, Mrs. Fraser, and Mrs. Forster. The latter, as I have related, was no longer with us, so there were five ladies in all. The gentlemen also numbered five, viz. Salkeld, of the Engineers, afterwards mortally wounded on the day of the assault at Delhi; Procter, of the 38th N.I.; Lieutenant Forrest, the husband of Mrs. Forrest; Wilson, of the Artillery; and myself — making altogether a party of ten. There was also a native servant of Salkeld's,

who had followed us out of the Main Guard and seemed disinclined to leave us. As we left our hiding-place and issued forth from a door leading down to the bank of the river we saw the whole extent of the cantonments in a blaze of light, as if every house had been set on fire. It was scarcely more than half a mile distant, and we could distinctly hear the hoarse shouts of the mutineers, mingled with volleys of musketry and discharges of cannon. It appeared to us to matter very little whether we remained or not—either way we were sure to be captured; and I don't suppose there was one amongst our little party who expected to live through that terrible night. Meerut, the nearest British station, was thirty-eight miles off, and situated as we were, what possible hope was there of reaching it in safety? Before quitting the house the khidmutgar who had befriended us, seeing I had no covering for my head, handed me his turban, beseeching us at the same time to be off with all speed, that being our only chance of escape. The ladies filled their pockets with small pieces of bread and meat, to save us

from starving in the event of our surviving till next day, and some one took a bottle full of water. The river Jumna at this season of the year does not extend to within several hundred yards of its banks, but is confined to two or three narrow channels in the middle, leaving a swampy marsh fully a quarter of a mile broad on each side. Through this our path lay, and that we made but little progress can be easily understood. Poor Mrs. Forrest, I have already mentioned, had been severely wounded in the Main Guard, and though she suffered much pain in her shoulder, and could proceed but slowly, she uttered no complaint, but walked out heroically. Each of us took charge of a lady, and I had little Miss Forrest to my share. The poor little child kept asking all kinds of innocent questions, not being able to realize the fearful events that had occurred.

In this manner we trudged on for about half an hour, when suddenly a bright streak of fire rose up behind us. To our horror we perceived it was Metcalfe's house on fire! Our first feeling was one of relief that we had delayed no

longer in leaving it; the next instant it naturally occurred to our thoughts that the servants might betray and disclose the direction of our flight. The idea of being pursued and captured, though it robbed us of our last hope, yet urged us on still faster and faster, till in a few minutes we reached the edge of the stream. And now, which way to turn we knew not: if we went to the right we should come to the city; if we turned to the left we should have to cross a deep canal which ran close to the northern boundary of cantonments and emptied itself into the river. This canal we knew was unfordable with the ladies, except at a point in close proximity to the very cantonments we were doing our utmost to flee from. At this juncture, and whilst we were still in doubt as to what course to pursue, a great shouting was heard a short distance to our right, which made us set off again in the direction of the canal as fast as our legs could carry us. The canal cutting was soon reached, and now what was to be done?

At length it was determined to send Salkeld's

native servant to reconnoitre the ford above alluded to, before we ventured ourselves to approach any nearer to the burning station, and report if the place was clear. Meanwhile we all lay down to snatch a little rest; but sleep, I need hardly say, was out of question. Yonder lay the cantonments, scarcely half a mile away, enveloped in flames and smoke, and casting a lurid glare on the surrounding landscape. It was an awful sight, and made us shudder as we looked on. The noise of firing at intervals still continued, and the midnight breeze every now and again bore back to our ears the frantic yells and shouts of the mutinous soldiery as, joined by the scum of the populace, they carried on their work of pillage and destruction. It was a sight never to be effaced from memory, and our feelings can better be imagined than described as, lying there on the sandy bed of the river, weary, dispirited, and bereft of all hope of succour, we awaited with anxious and throbbing hearts the messenger's return.

Forlorn indeed was our position, and less than hopeless the chances of escape!

CHAPTER VI.

A NIGHT OF PERIL.

It is impossible to describe our feverish state of suspense and expectation as we sat in that lonely spot awaiting the return of Salkeld's servant. In vain we kept straining our eyes from time to time through the moonlight (for I recollect the moon was nearly at the full), momentarily expecting to catch a glimpse of his returning figure; but minute after minute flew by, and still we could see no signs of him we so eagerly awaited. Suspense increased to anxiety, and anxiety gave place to suspicion and alarm. What could have delayed him? As yet he had given us no cause to doubt his fidelity, for he had remained in the Main Guard in charge of his master's loaded gun throughout

the tragic events of the day, and, as I have already mentioned, had willingly accompanied us in our headlong flight therefrom, when at any moment he might easily have deserted. A full hour, however, having elapsed since his departure, it seemed only too evident that he had seized the present opportunity to ensure his own safety by taking to flight; so we made up our minds to make for the ford without further delay, and run the risk of discovery.

The ford in question was not more than a few hundred yards distant, and as we stealthily approached its vicinity, the light thrown from the burning bungalows threatened every moment to betray us. The yelling and shouting, too, which had hitherto resembled a hoarse murmur, was now plainly distinguishable above the ceaseless rattle of musketry, and kept ringing in our ears like a death-knell. This incessant discharge of firearms almost tempted us to believe at one time that the European troops had arrived from Meerut; but we soon realized our mistake. With beating hearts we crept along the canal-bank, and gradually

approached the flaming cantonments; but although the forms of numberless marauders were distinctly visible in the act of plundering the adjacent bungalows, and vociferating at the top of their voices, we passed on unobserved, and, to our inexpressible relief, found the ford we were in search of without a soul in its immediate vicinity. We at once prepared to cross over, hoping to place some three or four miles between ourselves and cantonments ere morning broke. It was found to be not quite such an easy matter, however, to get the ladies across, as the water was considerably deeper than we anticipated, and on my first going in, to lead the way, I found it breast-high. Nevertheless, nothing daunted, we set to work, and in due course safely reached the opposite bank. Our watches now showed it was nearly three o'clock a.m.; in less than a couple of hours, therefore, morning would break, and notwithstanding we had traversed at least three miles since quitting Metcalfe's house, we were still within a very short distance of cantonments. We felt considerably revived, however, by the soaking

we got in wading through the canal, and the night air blowing on our dripping clothes made us feel quite chilly, so that we walked on at a brisker pace in order to keep ourselves warm.

Our chief aim now, of course, was to get away as far as possible from cantonments; but by the waning light of the moon it was impossible to make out the exact direction we were taking. A vast plain stretched before us, for the most part uncultivated at the present season, and with no particular landmark to guide us. The country passed over was exceedingly rough, being composed chiefly of stubble fields and thistles, and the ladies' feet, with their thin shoes, naturally got terribly torn and blistered as we wearily trudged on. In addition, some of them by this time had become faint and exhausted, and poor Forrest himself began to lag behind. The imminent peril, however, to which we were exposed served to keep the poor creatures up, and they toiled on as best they could, in spite of their aching limbs, until another small stream pulled us up. This, fortunately, was not of any great depth; so,

rapidly overcoming this obstacle, we continued to walk on for about another mile. It had now become imperative to call a halt, as many of the party were absolutely incapable of proceeding further; so, spying a small patch of scrub jungle not far off, we bent our steps thither, purposing to remain there till day should dawn. The cantonments apparently lay about three miles in our rear, and were still enveloped in smoke and flame, though the noise and din were no longer heard. The work of incendiarism, however, still continued, for every now and again we saw a fresh streak of flame shoot up into the air, as some new bungalow was set on fire, and shared the fate of all the rest.

I will not weary the reader by attempting to describe the harrowing thoughts which possessed our minds as we gazed on such a spectacle, nor enlarge on our feelings as we thought of the possible fate in store for us when morning broke. True we had not so far been followed up by the mutinous sepoys; but this we attributed to the fact that the plunder of the city and the congenial task of demolishing their

late officers' quarters had engaged their attention, to the exclusion of all other thoughts. That we should succeed in evading eventual capture seemed to us beyond the bounds of possibility, for we felt convinced that sooner or later a pursuit would surely be organized, and in that case capture and death must inevitably ensue. The utter helplessness of our position will be fully apparent when I mention that the only arms in our possession were three flimsy regimental swords of the old infantry pattern and one double-barrelled gun; and what possible resistance could we hope to make, under such circumstances, against an attack by fully armed sepoys? It seemed thus merely a question of a few hours more or less ere we should fall into the hands of our bloodthirsty foes. Small wonder, then, that thoughts of the gloomiest description reigned uppermost in our minds, and that we gave ourselves up for lost.

Having made our way to the scrub jungle, we all lay down amongst the brushwood, and, worn out with fatigue, I was just on the point of

dropping off to sleep, when suddenly some one shook me by the arm, exclaiming the sepoys were upon us. To start to my feet and seize the gun which lay by my side was the work of a second; the next moment served to reveal the peril we were in.

Not a hundred yards distant, and coming in a direct line towards us, we perceived a body of some eight or ten sepoys, two of whom were mounted on ponies. The imperfect light of dawning day was just sufficient to show us they were armed, though only about half were dressed in uniform. They were making apparently for Delhi by a country track, and were bearing down straight for the spot where we lay concealed. This fact showed them to be stragglers from Meerut. We had barely time to creep under the bushes and hide ourselves as well as we could when they were upon us. We watched them in breathless anxiety, not daring to move, and scarcely to breathe. Not for untold wealth would I pass such another moment of agonizing suspense. Now they slowly pass in Indian file within a few feet of

us. Surely we must be observed? But no; they are moving on. Can it be that they have not perceived us? Ah! they see us now, for one of them stoops and picks up something from the ground, and whispers to his comrades, and then all come to a sudden halt. Alas! our water-bottle had betrayed us! In our hurry and confusion we had left it lying in the open, and one of them, in stooping to examine it, had undoubtedly caught sight of some of our party as we lay amongst the brushwood. Although upwards of forty years have passed since the incident I am now relating, every movement of those ten sepoys is as clearly impressed upon my memory as if it had occurred but yesterday. They were standing within a few paces only of where I lay concealed, and I watched with an intensity of suspense too acute for words. There was complete silence, broken only by the low mutterings of the sepoys, and we distinctly heard them remark that people were hiding amongst the bushes. I involuntarily cocked my gun, and, filled with apprehension as to what they would do next, I

inwardly resolved, in the event of any threatening movement being made towards us, to shoot the foremost man dead. After a brief interval, which in the extreme tension of that supreme moment seemed interminable, and during which I clearly recognized by the gold regulation necklace he was wearing that the party was led by a native officer, we saw them, to our unbounded astonishment, silently move off, and after proceeding about a hundred yards further come to another halt. They now leisurely seated themselves on the ground, the two mounted men dismounting from their ponies and joining the group. Waiting to look no longer, we hastily rose from our crouching position and fled precipitately in the opposite direction. To our unspeakable relief no attempt was made to follow us, and we could once more breathe freely. Thus again we had providentially escaped from a grave danger, though why no attempt was made to molest us has ever remained a mystery to me. Possibly our immunity was due to the uncertain light, which effectually prevented them from seeing our

defenceless condition; or it may be that, less savage and bloodthirsty than the rest, they felt little inclination to imbrue their hands in unnecessary bloodshed.

The situation, however, was still beset with extreme peril, as further bands of mutineers, hastening to rejoin their comrades in Delhi, might cross our path at any moment; besides which, there was nothing to prevent the party from whom we had just escaped from giving information of our whereabouts as soon as they arrived at their destination. Such thoughts naturally filled our minds with extreme despondency, and we almost wished we had perished with the rest in the Main Guard rather than endure such torturing suspense.

CHAPTER VII.

FELLOW-FUGITIVES.

By this time it was broad daylight, and we now found ourselves approaching the banks of a large stream (one of those tributaries of the Jumna which here intersect the country in several places), and we at once determined to cross. After considerable search we fortunately discovered a spot where, by dint of wading up to our waists, the whole party passed over in safety. There was some tamarisk jungle lining the banks of the stream, and here, cold, wet, and weary, without a dry stitch of clothing on our backs, we lay down to rest. I shall never forget the blank look of despair depicted on every face when, as the morning advanced, the utter helplessness of our position forced

itself upon us. There sat the poor Misses Forrest, their dishevelled hair hanging down their backs, without a particle of covering for their heads. There lay their unfortunate mother, her head resting in the lap of one of her daughters, and, though suffering excruciating pain from the gunshot wound in her shoulder, yet never uttering a word of murmur or complaint. Mrs. Fraser sat close by, bewailing the untimely end of her little babe, who, she imagined, together with her sister, had perished in the Main Guard, both having been lost sight of in the panic and confusion which ensued when the firing commenced. Subsequently, however, it transpired that a Christian drummer belonging to the 54th had hidden them under a dark archway, and after the sepoys had left the enclosure conducted them unharmed to cantonments, whence, together with some of the other residents, they had escaped in a carriage to Kurnaul. The little girl, however, died from exposure and want of proper nourishment. The rest of our party lay all about, under the best shelter we could find, keeping

a sharp look-out on all sides to see that we were not surprised—all except poor Forrest, who was lying some distance apart, in a more or less prostrate condition, having been much hurt from the recoil of a howitzer during the defence of the Magazine, besides being struck in the hand by a musket-ball.

The few scraps of bread and meat we had brought with us were now produced, and after being placed for a while in the sun to dry, as everything was soaked from the frequent wettings we had gone through during the course of the night, we each took a mouthful—without exception the saddest meal I have ever made. While thus engaged, and discussing our future plans, we were startled by a villager coming right upon us without our having noticed his approach. After observing us for a few seconds, he passed quietly on his way without remark. But the incident made us feel very uneasy, and we determined to shift our place of concealment without delay. Just as we were about to recommence our journey we suddenly discovered that Forrest had disappeared. In

vain we searched for a good half-hour, shouting out his name at the top of our voices. There was no response, and we were in the act of moving off without him, when I fortunately chanced upon the very bush where he had concealed himself. It seems he had been watching us all the while, and at first refused all our entreaties to get up and join us, saying he felt so thoroughly worn out from all he had gone through that he would far rather be left in peace to die where he was. With the greatest difficulty we persuaded him to rise; but it was evident, after proceeding a short distance, that the ladies were equally exhausted and their remaining strength would soon be spent. The sun, moreover, was now high in the heavens, and the day was dreadfully hot. None of the party had adequate protection for their heads, and the unfortunate ladies had to put the skirts of their dresses over theirs to avoid sunstroke. Unluckily, we were now crossing a comparatively bare plain, with only a few patches of dhak jungle scattered here and there, and far away from water. Making

our way to one of these patches, we halted once more. It afforded but slight shelter from the burning sun, and we were, moreover, consumed by a parching thirst. We suffered so much from the latter that Salkeld and Wilson volunteered to go and look for water. They had been absent nearly an hour, and we were becoming anxious on their account, when all of a sudden we heard a tremendous yell, and, looking up, perceived them both running back in our direction, chased by a number of half-naked villagers armed with spears and *lathies* (long staves bound with iron). Concealment being no longer possible, we all jumped up, and in a few moments found ourselves completely hemmed in by some thirty or forty natives, who crowded round with such threatening looks that we feared the worst. Presently several others came up, less scantily clothed, who seemed more civil, and offered to conduct us to their village, where they informed us there were some more *sahib-logue*, whom they had found wandering about in the morning. Believing this to be merely a ruse

to get us into their power, we declined at first to accompany them, when one of them said he would go and fetch some token to assure us of the truth of their statement; and whilst he departed on this errand the rest showed us the way to a clump of trees, some distance off, where better shelter was procurable from the fierce heat of the midday sun. As we were almost dying from thirst, we asked them to fetch us water; and shortly after they returned bringing a pitcher of milk and some coarse *chuppatties*, which we gratefully accepted.

And now, who shall describe our delight as we recognized in the distance the form of poor Colonel Knyvett, of the 38th Native Infantry, accompanied by Lieutenant Gambier, of the same corps, and Mr. Marshall, the European merchant at Delhi, the latter carrying a musket on his shoulder with a fixed bayonet! Great were the congratulations poured out on both sides at this unexpected meeting; and their surprise at seeing *us* can be easily imagined, for they fully believed that every soul in the Main Guard had been massacred. From them

we learnt that as soon as intelligence reached cantonments of the catastrophe at the Cashmere Gate, the majority of the residents who had conveyances at their disposal beat a hasty retreat by the trunk road in the direction of Kurnaul, which station, it was hoped, they would reach in safety. Others less fortunate took to flight on foot, amongst them being Colonel Knyvett and Gambier, who remained at the Regimental Quarter Guard expostulating with their men till long after dark. But all remonstrances were fruitless. They were told at last to be off, and some of the ruffians actually fired several shots at them as they ran across the parade-ground. For the remainder of the night they had wandered about the country in the same plight as ourselves, the poor old Colonel being almost dead with exposure and fatigue.

Our party now amounted to thirteen in all, but, rack our brains as we might, no feasible means of escape presented itself to our minds. At every moment we were informed that the *Telinga Log*, *i.e.* sepoys, were scouring the

country in search of fugitive Europeans; but the day wore on, and the afternoon came, and these reports turned out to be false. At length we endeavoured, by the aid of a heavy bribe, to secure the assistance of the villagers, and eventually signed a paper agreeing to pay the sum of Rs. 10,000 if they would take us in safety to some European station. As an earnest of what we said we gave them nearly all the money we happened to possess, viz. thirty odd rupees, in addition to two or three valuable rings, on which they promised to bring some ponies to enable the ladies to ride as far as Meerut, walking being out of the question in their footsore condition. The evening, however, drew on apace, and we instinctively felt they were only deceiving us; and when some of them returned, and said the ponies were not procurable that day, but that if we would wait till the next they might be able to get them, our suspicions were fairly aroused. We felt convinced their only object was to detain us till the mutineers in Delhi should be apprised of our whereabouts; so we determined to be

off at once rather than run the risk of falling into their hands.

The sun was sinking beyond the far western horizon, through a murky haze of reddish dust, as we again resumed our wanderings on that sultry summer evening wheresoever fate might lead us. We gave one last look towards Delhi ere setting forth. An enormous black cloud hovered over the site of the cantonments, which, from the appearance of the smoke that ascended from the smouldering bungalows, to blend at last with the inky mass above, appeared between four and five miles distant. The villagers pointed towards it significantly, and intimated that all India was destined to share the same fate. With sorrowful hearts we turned away, not knowing whither to go. As the short Indian twilight began to close in we found ourselves on the banks of the Jumna; but the broad swift current, as it rolled hoarsely by, filled us with despair. How could we ever hope to cross? We turned to some of the natives, who had accompanied us, and inquired if they could point out a ford. There was none,

they assured us, within miles; but after a while one of them suggested our proceeding to a place not far off, where it might be possible to get across. A few hundred yards brought us to the spot; but the water seemed far above our depth, and on one of us attempting to cross he found it was as much as he could do to prevent himself being carried away by the current. As we looked on despairingly, a cry was raised that the sepoys were upon us! It was better to be drowned than be shot down by them, so we madly plunged in. God only knows what would have become of us—for we must inevitably have been submerged—when, the report turning out to be untrue, we retraced our steps to the bank. The natives now offered to carry us over one at a time, if we would venture to trust to their guidance. It seemed of such vital importance to get across the river that we determined to hazard the experiment at all risks. It was a bold resolve, and I well remember the courage of the ladies well-nigh failed them at the last moment. Finally, grasping a native on each side firmly round the neck,

they were all in turn taken securely across, and the whole party landed safely on the opposite bank. We now endeavoured to persuade these men to accompany us to Meerut; but this they positively declined to do, and immediately commenced clamouring for reward. We flung them a few rupees and walked slowly onwards. Darkness by this time had set in, and it was with great difficulty that we picked our way through the fields. Although the night was warm, we suffered much from cold, owing to our dripping clothes, and our teeth chattered in our heads like so many castanets. Soon after quitting the banks of the river, we were, to our surprise, rejoined by the same three or four men who had assisted us to cross, and they now offered of their own accord to show us the way to Meerut. This seemed strange after their former point-blank refusal; but we said nothing, and silently followed in their wake. The sequel proved what treacherous rascals they were. On pretence of avoiding villages which they said were infested with robbers, they took us a long circuit across country, till at

length, just as the moon was rising, we arrived on the brink of a wide stream, which they informed us was the river Hindun, and invited us to cross. Now we were well aware that the river in question was miles away, and it instinctively occurred to our minds that this was the identical river we had that evening already crossed. The probable truth then flashed on us: a pursuing party from Delhi had doubtless arrived at their village after our departure, and their object now in enticing us to recross was to deliver us into their power. Feeling sure that our surmise was correct, we refused to listen to their entreaties, and, seeing we were not to be taken in, they hastily fled, and we saw no more of them. Meanwhile, during this altercation, some of the party had lain down to rest on the sandy bank by the edge of the stream, and I also, feeling thoroughly knocked up, soon fell into a profound slumber. How long I slept I know not, but I recollect waking up with a piercing sensation of cold. The damp appeared to have eaten into one's bones, and my limbs ached to such an extent that I

could scarcely stand. I was in the throes of a sharp attack of ague, from which I had already repeatedly suffered during my sojourn at Delhi. All was still and quiet as I looked around. The moon shone placidly down from above, and, lighting up the water with a silver streak, shadowed forth our prostrate forms clear and distinct on the white sand. The eldest Miss Forrest was lying next to me; she also had just woke up, feeling intensely cold and miserable. The others gradually awoke one by one, and we again moved on. Throughout the remainder of that terrible night we toiled on without intermission, merely stopping for a few minutes now and again to rest our wearied feet, which, owing to our boots and shoes having been in most instances completely destroyed from repeated soakings, were sadly bruised and blistered. Poor Salkeld, I recollect, was going barefoot, having given his own shoes to Miss Annie Forrest, who had lost hers in the act of fording one of the many streams we had crossed.

During the course of the night we had been

much alarmed by the noise of firing, which proceeded at frequent intervals from the villages round about, and for which at the time we were at a loss to account; but we subsequently ascertained that it was occasioned by the villagers defending themselves against gangs of marauding Goojurs, who, though ordinarily given to peaceable avocations, had nevertheless taken advantage of the recent disturbance to rob and pillage their neighbours; but I shall have more to say of these rascals as we proceed with this narrative. Day was now beginning to dawn, and it was evident we could not escape discovery long, as the country was quite open, and villagers were seen moving about in all directions. At last we came across some harmless-looking individuals tending cattle, so we ventured to offer them our last remaining rupee, and asked them to go to the nearest village and buy us some food. They stared for a few seconds, and then, scampering off, presently returned with a large crowd collected at their heels, amongst them being the head man of the village. This latter seemed inclined to be

civil, and at his bidding a man was despatched in search of milk and *chuppatties*. There was a splendid tope of mango trees hard by, so thither we bent our steps. By the time we had reached this shelter an enormous crowd had assembled, and it was with considerable difficulty that we forced a passage through the throng. In about an hour's time some *dal* and *chuppatties* were set before us, which we devoured with a keen appetite. At least a hundred persons of all sexes and ages were now watching us, and some of these, from the occasional remarks they let fall, seemed actually to commiserate our lot; and, to tell the truth, I can hardly wonder at our exciting their pity, for what with the torn and filthy state of our garments, and the truly miserable appearance of the ladies, we must have been objects of compassion to the most hardened wretch. I may add that it is my firm conviction that whatever little civility we experienced in the course of our wanderings was altogether due to the presence of the ladies, and that, had it not been for the sight of these poor

creatures, we should all have been undoubtedly murdered; a remark fully borne out by the fact that Lieutenant Willoughby and four other officers were barbarously done to death by villagers whilst escaping from Delhi to Meerut by a route almost identical with the one we were following.*

* With reference to poor George Willoughby's sad fate, it is gratifying to mention that the Government of India have, within the last few years, at the instance of Lieutenant-Colonel R. Parry Nisbet, C.I.E., late Commissioner of the Delhi Division, erected a tastefully designed Memorial to the memory of this heroic officer and the comrades associated with him in the blowing up of the Delhi Magazine, on the site of their gallant exploit. Perhaps no more pleasing act of justice and honour has brightened the brilliant annals of Lord Dufferin's Viceroyalty of India than this hearty, though tardy, recognition of an event which will live in the history of the British nation as long as her soldiers continue ready to emulate such noble deeds of heroism.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN THE HANDS OF THE GOOJURS.

THE seemingly friendly attitude of these villagers put us slightly more at our ease, and we buoyed up ourselves with the hope that the promise of a substantial money payment might induce them to assist us on our way. Alas! our hopes were shortlived, for presently a fakir (a wandering mendicant, held in great veneration by Hindoos), dressed in long yellow robes, and with his face besmeared with paint and ashes, entered the tope, and, sitting down in one corner, beckoned to the natives standing about, who thereupon, leaving us, went and gathered in a circle round him. They appeared to listen with such eagerness to what he was saying, occasionally casting a furtive glance in

our direction, that we instinctively felt all our old fears return with redoubled force. Some one suggested he was a sepoy, in disguise, from Delhi, whose object was to incite them to murder us; and, as this terrible idea seemed by no means improbable, our newly-cherished hopes of escape once more deserted us.

No words can express the sickening sensation of despair which crept over us as this dreadful surmise took possession of our minds, and we watched their proceedings with the utmost anxiety. At length the crowd round the fakir gradually dispersed, and came and surrounded us once more. A short interval of silence prevailed, when some of them intimated that it was no longer safe for us to remain, as they had just received intelligence that the *Telinga Log* were close behind, and we must take our departure forthwith. Take our departure! An arid plain lay in front, with not a tree in sight; even if we eluded our remorseless pursuers, death from sunstroke was inevitable. Turn whichever way we might, our doom was sealed. Deaf to all entreaties, they insisted on our

leaving, and, in order to expedite our departure, commenced to hustle us in the rudest manner.

So they turned us out, and we wandered forth, little caring where we went or what became of us. It was midday, and as we issued forth from the friendly shelter of the trees into the burning plain beyond, we were nearly blinded by the scorching wind, which blew volumes of dust in our faces, and almost suffocated us at every step. On, on we walked, the sun blazing down on our uncovered heads, without a hope, without an object. In a short while we found ourselves getting gradually surrounded by fierce-looking men, armed with spears and bludgeons. These were no other than the dreaded Goojurs themselves. Their numbers increased rapidly, and, in whichever direction we looked, we observed others, similarly armed, running towards us. At length, when they had completely hemmed us in, they gave a fearful shout, and rushed upon us with demoniacal gestures. We stood back to back, and made a vain attempt to beat them off; but, being ten to one, we were soon overpowered. One rascal

laid hold of my sword, and tried to wrench it out of my hand. In vain I resisted; a blow from behind stretched me on my back, and, ere I could recover myself, I was mobbed by some half a dozen others. In the midst of all this *mêlée* I saw Colonel Knyvett levelling the gun he was carrying point-blank at the head of one of the wretches as he stood whooping and yelling by way of inciting on the rest. Fortunately, some one shouted out to him not to fire; so, deliberately removing the caps, he gave it up. It was as well we permitted ourselves to be disarmed, for, had we continued the struggle, our lives would undoubtedly have been sacrificed. Having once got us down, they set to work stripping us of everything. Studs, rings, watches, etc., all were torn off. They did not even spare my inner vest, and one of the ruffians actually snatched away the piece of cotton cloth which was wrapped round my head. I trembled with foreboding as I saw the unfortunate ladies in the grasp of these savages. One of them had her clothes literally torn off her back, whilst the others were treated

with similar barbarity. At last, when they had appropriated everything, leaving only our shirts and trousers, and the ladies their upper garments, the entire band retreated a short distance and commenced quarrelling over the spoil. At this juncture the same fakir, who we thought had been the cause of our expulsion from the tope of trees, came up and inquired if he could be of any assistance. It was hard to believe he was not playing us false; but, having no option, we requested him to take us where water could be procured, for we were perishing from thirst. He pointed to some trees in the far distance, where he intimated there was a well, so we slowly followed. On the way we happened to pass a stagnant puddle, and here—perhaps the reader will scarcely credit it—we one and all stooped down on our hands and knees, and greedily drank its filthy contents. After much toil we arrived at the well, where, after drawing us some fresh water, our conductor suggested we should lie down and rest. Later on he offered to take us to a town in the vicinity, where there was a *Tehseel* and some

Government *chupprassies* (police), who probably might be inclined to afford us some aid. On the way we were again pounced upon by Goojurs, who, finding nothing to rob us of, contented themselves with pulling off the gilt buttons on the colonel's blue frock-coat, which the other rascals had overlooked, and then, with final gestures of menace and defiance, permitted us to pass on.

By the time the police-station was reached we were nearly dead-beat; but here we were received with supreme indifference. In fact, the demeanour of the *chupprassies* was the reverse of reassuring: they merely looked on in sullen silence, and on our venturing to remind them that, as paid servants of the Government, they were bound to afford us all the protection in their power, they told us, with a sneer, that the British *raj* was no longer in existence. They further informed us that the station of Meerut was in flames, and nearly all the Europeans killed.

After some trouble we persuaded them to bring out some *charpoys*, on which the poor

ladies were only too thankful to lie down and rest themselves. An immense mob of natives from the town shortly surrounded us, and kept reiterating the dismal intelligence we had already so frequently heard, that sepoys and sowars were out in every direction, bent on our capture. Growing bolder and more insolent, they insisted at last on searching each individual of the party, including the ladies, as nothing would dissuade them from the belief that we had money and valuables concealed about our persons. It would take up too much space to describe all the indignities we were forced to submit to at the hands of these scoundrels, or to relate in what conflicting hopes and fears the remainder of that never-to-be-forgotten afternoon passed away and evening arrived. The fakir meanwhile had gone on his way, and we knew not what course to pursue. Fortunately for us, a few natives of somewhat more respectable appearance than the rest offered to take us to their village hard by, where we might procure something to eat and drink and take shelter

for the night. We mechanically got up and followed, though our minds were filled all the time with vague apprehensions and doubts as to the sincerity of their intentions, and we could not refrain from fancying that some fresh act of treachery was meditated.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FAKIR'S HUT.

As we approached the village, which was an unusually large one, named Khekra, the entire population turned out to come and gaze at our party, and such was the miserable appearance we presented in our tattered clothes, that it was impossible at first to persuade them we were gentlefolk and not *Gora Log* (ordinary soldiers). After taking us through several narrow alleys and dirty streets, we at length reached the centre of the place. Meanwhile we were suffering from extreme depression of spirits, and felt a presentiment in our minds that we were only being taken to our slaughter; and this awful idea was still further strengthened by some one saying he had seen sowars entering

the village. As darkness set in we were given some *goor* (unrefined sugar) and *chuppatties* to eat, and then conducted to a small hut belonging to a fakir on the outskirts of the town, where they informed us we were to remain for the night; but our fears as to their treacherous intentions had such an ascendency over our minds that we found it totally impossible to conquer our feelings of dread and alarm. The atmosphere of the hut was so close and stifling that we were fain to come outside and lie in the open. Here there were a crowd of people still collected, conversing together in whispers, and we had no difficulty in distinguishing that we were the subject of their discourse; but exhausted nature could bear up no longer, and I soon fell fast asleep, notwithstanding the predictions of Forrest and the Colonel that we should all be murdered ere morning broke. It must have been, I should say, as near as possible about midnight when I suddenly found myself rudely shaken. I was so sound asleep at the time that it was some seconds before I could realize where I was, or who it was that had

roused me so abruptly. The light of the moon at this moment shining full on his countenance enabled me to recognize, as he stood bending over me, the scared features of ——, his hair standing erect, his eyes starting out of their sockets, and wearing such an expression of anguish on his face that I was indeed startled. "Get up, for God's sake!" he said; "they are going to cut all our throats!" and then, pointing to a native who had apparently brought him a blanket to lie upon, he whispered hoarsely, "Do you see that man? He wants me to sit upon that cloth while my head is struck off from behind!" The poor man's mind was evidently unhinged, and his heated imagination had conjured up this hideous fancy. The entire party were fully roused by this time, wondering what the commotion was all about, and it was with the greatest difficulty that we succeeded at last in quieting him; but not before he had well-nigh terrified the poor ladies out of their wits by going about and asking every native he met, "*Khoon kub chullega?*" literally, "When will the blood be spilt?" I don't think any of

us slept another wink for the remainder of that night.

Towards daybreak the individual who had been most active in exerting himself in our behalf the previous day, accompanied by two others, came, and made us re-enter the hut, as he said he did not wish the rest of the villagers to know where we were concealed, some of them having openly expressed their intention of murdering us. This was pleasant news, but in our helpless condition we felt powerless to counteract their designs. It was like waiting quietly for the deathstroke, and our minds verged on despair as we thought of our impending doom. The door was then fastened upon us from outside, and the men went away.

Imbued with a sickening sense of dread and apprehension as to what would follow, the reader will easily imagine what our sensations were, locked up in this wretched little hovel, without even a window to let in light or fresh air; and, to add to our troubles, Forrest had mysteriously disappeared during the night, and none of us could tell where he had gone. As

the day advanced the heat became intolerable, and we were well-nigh suffocated. At last, about midday, the same native returned, bringing food and water. We learnt, on inquiry from him, that poor Forrest had not been found, and we were quite at a loss to account for his strange absence, and the only conclusion we could come to was, that he had gone stealthily off to Meerut without divulging his intention, for fear of being prevented by us from effecting his object. When we had finished our meal the man again retired, but this time, at our request, left the door slightly ajar. Through this the flies swarmed in such numbers that the room was literally darkened with them. Oh, what a day we had! What with the heat, and the flies, and the suspense we were in, I thought I should have expired. In the evening we were again visited by the same persons, and more food was brought. We also succeeded in getting poor Mrs. Forrest's wound washed and dressed by the native barber-surgeon of the village. After thoroughly cleansing it from all the sand and dirt which had collected, and extracting certain portions of her

dress which the bullet had carried into the wound in its passage, he caused boiling *ghee* (clarified butter) to be passed completely through it, and after this painful process had been repeated two or three times, a cloth was bound over both orifices of the wound. Next day it assumed a more healthy appearance, and finally commenced to suppurate; and although the treatment I have described was undoubtedly of a somewhat heroic nature, I believe it effectually prevented mortification from setting in, and was the means of saving this brave and gentle lady's life. Indeed, when I think of all she went through and suffered, it is more than astonishing that she ever survived the privations and hardships of that terrible time.

After the sun had set we were permitted to go outside and cleanse ourselves in a rill of water which ran close by the hut; and what a luxury it was to wash off the filth and dirt which had accumulated since the day we had left Delhi! Night coming on, we lay down to rest in front of the hut, and a fakir came and treated

us to an extemporary song, which, from the occasional words we caught every now and again, appeared a sort of panegyric on the great and mighty "*Sahiblogue.*" Altogether we fancied the people were much more friendly, and it struck us that better news of the state of affairs might have reached them from Meerut. The night passed without any fresh alarms, and as morning dawned we were bundled back into the hut the same as before. We now made a vigorous attempt to get a letter from us taken to the general officer commanding at Meerut; but no one seemed inclined to comply with our request, in spite of the rich bribe we offered. At last, after great difficulty, we succeeded in persuading a native to risk the attempt, and Gambier, having written a few lines in French with a stick for a pen, we saw the former conceal it about his person and shortly after depart. This day went by in much the same manner as the previous one, except that we were hourly harassed by ever-recurring reports of the *Telinga Log* having been seen scouring the neighbourhood in search of fugitives, and we were thus kept in

a continual state of dread lest we should be discovered.

Forrest meanwhile still remained absent, nor could we ascertain what had become of him. Towards evening, however, to the no small joy of his poor wife and daughters, he suddenly appeared before the door of the hut, conducted by a couple of natives holding a piece of cloth suspended over his bare head to keep off the sun. He was quite incapable of giving any account of himself, but from the statements of the natives it appeared that he had been found lying almost insensible in a ditch not far off, and absolutely unconscious of how he came there. Poor Forrest! It was evident his mind was wandering when he left us so suddenly on the night of our arrival at the village.

Shortly after this we received another addition to our party by the arrival of two poor sergeants' wives, each carrying a baby in her arms. They had been wandering about, poor creatures! ever since the day of the outbreak at Delhi, not knowing what had become of their husbands, and having been robbed of all they

possessed except the clothes on their backs. At some of the villages they had passed through, they had experienced much indignity and abuse, whilst at others they were fed on unleavened cakes and an occasional draught of milk. It is needless to say how thankful they felt at finding themselves once more amongst European faces. It was now Friday evening, May 15, exactly four whole days and nights since our miraculous escape from the Main Guard, and the cantonments of Meerut, we were told, were still upwards of thirty miles distant. Supposing, therefore, that our messenger reached that place in twenty-four hours, we must needs wait here at least a couple of days longer ere assistance could possibly arrive. Two entire days! What might not happen meanwhile? Nevertheless, we lay down that night with lighter hearts than we had ever done before, and with feelings of the deepest thankfulness to Almighty God for our wonderful preservation hitherto.

Our trials, however, were not destined to be over yet, for in the middle of the night we were suddenly aroused, and informed that the

sepoys had discovered our hiding-place, and were coming the next morning to seize and carry us back prisoners to Delhi. I will not attempt to describe the nature of our feelings on hearing this disastrous intelligence. There could possibly be *no* hope of escape now, and we were plunged in despair. The villagers, however, suggested that we should go out to a *bagh* (garden) a couple of miles distant, where we might hide during the day, and return in the evening when the sepoys had left. With heavy hearts, and without one of us ever venturing to believe that any of the party would live to come back, we set out for the garden. Here we passed through a day of scorching heat, which the scanty foliage of the trees did but little to mitigate, and consumed all the while by a parching thirst. But I will briefly pass over the events of that trying morning, and will merely add that we remained out there alone by ourselves, in the utmost state of trepidation and suspense, till past noon, when some of the natives returned with the usual supply of *dal* and *chuppatties*, and the welcome news that no sepoys had shown

themselves at the village, and we might now retrace our steps without fear. While we were congratulating ourselves on this piece of good fortune, a messenger arrived from Hurchundpore, a walled town situated some five miles further on the road to Meerut, saying his master, a Mr. Cohen, hearing of our miserable plight, had sent him to express his sympathy at our situation, and begging us to take shelter with him. We were naturally overjoyed at the receipt of this kind message, but we could not help wondering why the villagers had not informed us earlier of Mr. Cohen's whereabouts. This was a question to which we could obtain no satisfactory reply, and it seemed more than probable that the people of the village had been all along playing a double game, intending doubtless to give us up to whichever side they thought would reward them the most. When we returned to the village in the evening we made them promise to have a country cart in readiness the first thing next morning to take the ladies to Hurchundpore, and in the joyous knowledge that the present night was to see

the last of all our miseries and privations we cheerfully lay down and composed ourselves to rest.

By daybreak next morning we were up and on our way to Mr. Cohen's, and arriving there between seven and eight o'clock, we were cordially welcomed by the old man and his two grandsons, who, it turned out, were in some way connected with the famous "Dyce Sombre" family. It appeared they owned several villages round about, for which they annually paid a certain sum to the Government. The old man himself had lived here all his life —so long, in fact, that he had almost forgotten his own language, and had become thoroughly native in all his habits; but his two grandsons were somewhat different in this respect, and lived more in European fashion. We were soon refreshed with a cup of hot tea, after which clean clothes were brought, and we proceeded to divest ourselves of the soiled rags we were wearing and enjoy the luxury of soap and water. A room was set apart for the ladies of the party, and they too managed to procure

a change of apparel, in the shape of some clean *koortas* and snowy white *chuddahs* of fine nankeen, which latter they wore over their heads and draped round their shoulders in native style, and really looked so spruce and tidy in their novel costume, when they joined us at breakfast, that we could scarcely recognize them as the poor forlorn creatures of yesterday. We had seen nothing all this while of Forrest and the Colonel, as on our arrival they had mysteriously disappeared into the old man's private apartments, where they had remained shut up ever since without once deigning to visit us. At length, towards the afternoon, a demi-official bulletin arrived in the Colonel's handwriting, addressed to Lieutenant and Adjutant Gambier, *late* 38th Light Infantry, requesting his immediate attendance. Marvelling much at the import of all this official parade, we awaited with some impatience Gambier's explanation of the matter; when, coming back shortly after, he gave such a ludicrous account of the dignity and self-importance which the old Colonel had thought

fit to assume, now that all sense of danger was past, that we were convulsed with roars of laughter. Scarcely had our merriment subsided when a step was heard at the door, and who should walk in but the Colonel himself. He then proceeded to inform us in an authoritative manner of the arrangements he had thought fit to make for our conveyance to Meerut; and having told us thus much with the dignity becoming the commandant of a mutinous sepoy regiment no longer in existence, he looked around on the assembled company, and after the manner of the immortal Pickwick, "smiled benignantly." The dear old Colonel! what a character he was, to be sure. How I wish I could have taken a picture of him then and there, as he stood nodding and smiling at the ladies, and asking us all round each in turn how we all did! As for Forrest, we neither saw nor heard anything of him, as he remained shut up all day long in old Mr. Cohen's "sanctum sanctorum," enjoying the luxury of a punkah and smoking a fragrant hookah, without seemingly troubling his head about us in the least;

but it should be mentioned in extenuation of his apparent neglect that he was a man of somewhat advanced age, and the terrible hardships and exposure incidental to our flight, coupled with the painful bullet-wound in his hand, had doubtless rendered him physically incapable of any exertion for the time being.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

CHAPTER X.

THE RESCUE.

At four o'clock p.m. a plentiful repast was set before us, and, to our no small astonishment, several bottles of beer were produced, followed, when dinner was removed, by a bottle of excellent Cognac. We were all sitting round the table, quietly talking over our recent adventures and hairbreadth escapes, and looking forward with light hearts to setting out next day on our journey to Meerut, when all of a sudden a tremendous shout was raised without, followed by such a terrible commotion amongst the townspeople that we were utterly dumbfounded to conceive the cause of so much uproar and confusion. Our ignorance was not of long duration, for soon there arose a cry amongst

the excited multitude which, as it became gradually louder and more distinct, filled us with terror and dismay. "Badsháh ká fouj!" they shouted, "Badsháh Dehli ká fouj aya!" ("The King's troops, the King of Delhi's troops have come!"); and there, sure enough, on looking out, we saw some forty troopers, dressed in the French-grey uniform of the mutinous 3rd Cavalry, drawn up in line just outside the walls and demanding admittance.

The first thing we called for was to be supplied with arms; the next thing we did was to throw off the clean clothes we had on and jump into our former old ones. How far this exchange was likely to benefit us I know not; but certain it is that in the space of a very few seconds we were once more clad in the filthy garments of the previous day, and stood ready to meet the worst. In the midst of all this excitement two European officers were observed riding up the street, and as they were followed very quietly a few paces in rear by the troopers themselves, we came to the very natural conclusion that they were friends and

not enemies. And now the rush that was made by one and all to greet them as they rode up to the house! I was not long in recognizing both officers to be old friends—Gough and Mackenzie, of the 3rd Cavalry, whose acquaintance I had already made in the course of frequent visits to Meerut for the purpose of attending the usual cold-weather gaieties. I must leave the reader to imagine the innumerable questions which were poured out and answered on both sides during the remainder of that evening; of how we now, for the first time, became aware of the particulars of the previous mutiny at Meerut, and of the unfeigned sorrow with which we learnt the names of all the poor people who had been killed at that place. In reply to our queries as to how they had succeeded in finding us out, they informed us that the messenger we had despatched only reached Meerut on the evening of the previous day—that is to say, forty-eight hours after his departure—and that as soon as they ascertained our whereabouts they volunteered, with the remnant of their regiment which

had remained faithful, to come out to our rescue, and had accordingly started the same night; but, owing to the long round they had unavoidably taken, by going in the first place to the village from whence we had despatched our letter, they had been unable to reach us earlier.

A very curious fact in connection with the receipt of our letter by General Hewitt may be here related. It seems it was delivered to him whilst sitting at dinner with some other officers in one of the European barracks in which, for the time being, the General and his head-quarter staff had taken up their residence. As soon as its contents had been ascertained, it is said that the missive was *thrown aside*—indeed, Lieutenant Mackenzie told us that he saw it picked up from under the table—as it was considered hopeless to send a party to succour fugitives who were in such close proximity to Delhi. Fortunately for us, however, Lieutenant Mackenzie heard of the message, and feeling that women and children could not possibly be left to their fate amongst the rebels without an effort at least being made to save

them, he most pluckily requested the General's permission to ride out with his men and make the attempt. Just as they were starting from Meerut they were joined by Lieutenant Gough (now Lieut.-General Sir Hugh Gough, V.C., G.C.B.), who, having been informed that Mackenzie had volunteered for this dangerous duty, determined in the most gallant manner to accompany him on an errand which they both could not otherwise than feel might probably be their last. Amongst the many praiseworthy deeds recorded during the Mutiny, perhaps few are deserving of more commendation than the self-sacrificing devotion of these two officers.

The sense of freedom which we now experienced can only be fully appreciated by those —and, alas! they were not a few—who, like ourselves, have known what it is to wander for five whole days and nights, footsore, famished, and weary, over rugged fields and arid plains, through rivers and morasses, not daring to ask for shelter for fear of being betrayed, and fancying each hour that passed would probably be

our last. That night, ere retiring to rest, we all sat down to a sumptuous supper, and there was such a sound of "revelry by night" as must have fairly astonished the native rustics of Hurchundpore.

Long before daylight next morning we were up and moving, and having shaken hands all round with our hospitable hosts, and wished them good-bye, we jumped into the *hackeries* which had been provided for us, and set forth on our journey to Meerut.* The *hackeries* we travelled in were common country carts, each drawn by a pair of bullocks, and the only protection we had from the sun was a piece of white cloth stretched over the top, which barely sufficed to keep off its rays. There were only two of them, one for the ladies, and one for ourselves, and it can be imagined what a trying day we had with eight persons packed inside each. We had nearly thirty miles of a

* Mr. Cohen eventually received a handsome reward for his loyal adherence to the Government, in the shape of a large *jagheer*, or grant of land, in spite of repeated threats from the mutineers at Delhi that his property would be confiscated and his villages destroyed.

cross-country road to get over before reaching our destination, and the jolting we experienced bade fair to break every bone in our bodies ere the journey was over. Nevertheless we jogged merrily on, and only stopped once for a short rest of a couple of hours to cook a few *chuppatties* and feed the horses of our escort. In the course of the day we came across the largest herd of antelope I have ever seen, the black buck alone numbering two or three hundred at least. One of the troopers galloped up and took a shot with his carbine, but failed to hit one.

We were still many miles from Meerut when night closed in, in spite of our pressing fresh bullocks into our service at every eight or nine miles, and making all the expedition we could. About ten o'clock we began to approach the precincts of cantonments, but for a couple of miles we passed nothing but the charred and blackened ruins of houses that had been burnt by the mutineers on the night of the outbreak. What a sad and melancholy sight it was! At length the sound of an occasional rifle-shot, as it rang forth

sharp and clear in the still night air, proclaimed that we were nearing the pickets of the European troops. Presently we were challenged in the deep hoarse tones of the British sentry, and then we passed a continuous chain of riflemen posted round that part of the station in which all the people had taken refuge. The walls of the *Dumdumma,* a hastily improvised fortification of earth surrounding two artillery barracks which had been erected for sheltering the women and children and unarmed *refugées,* now appeared in sight, at the gate leading into which the *hackeries* came to a halt. We all jumped out, and who shall describe the welcome that awaited us! The first persons I recognized were Mrs. Stannus and Miss Whish, who were both looking out for me. After making me swallow a cup of delicious tea, they conducted me to a room in a large barrack, where there was a repast already set out in expectation of our coming. Here I found several other friends, who were kindness itself, not the least among them being Dr. and Mrs. Bicknell. The former, after shaking me warmly by the

hand, presented me with a foaming tankard of pale ale, which I drained to the dregs. There was only one sad heart amongst our party, and that was poor Mrs. Fraser. She had been looking forward to meeting her husband, who was in command of the Sappers and Miners at Meerut, and fancying what his delight would be in welcoming her again, when, alas! the first thing she heard was that he had been shot by his own men. That night we slept soundly, and oh, the joy of waking up the next morning and finding we were really safe!

It will be remembered that in describing our escape from the Cashmere bastion I mentioned having seen Lieutenant Osborn, of my regiment, bind up his wounded thigh, and then drop from the embrasure into the ditch and scale the opposite counterscarp in the wake of Lieutenant Willoughby and two or three other officers. It seems this party started at once across country, in the hope of reaching Meerut; but after accompanying them about twelve miles, Osborn, finding himself incapable of proceeding further on account of his wound,

was left in a ravine, whilst the others continued their flight, promising to send back help as soon as they reached their destination. It is sad to relate that Lieutenant Willoughby and his companions were all killed a few miles from this spot, in a desperate encounter with some villagers, who attempted to rob them; but Osborn, although stripped of all his clothing, with the exception of his pith helmet, by the villanous Goojurs, was taken pity on by a native woman, who fed him for three days, and after enduring incredible sufferings he was eventually carried into Meerut on a *charpoy*, more dead than alive, by some well-affected villagers, which place he had only reached the morning of the day on which we ourselves had arrived. After several months in hospital, Lieutenant Osborn sufficiently recovered to serve as orderly officer to Colonel Seaton, on his march down the Doab from Delhi to Futtehgurh in December, 1857; but the exposure, suffering, and anxiety which he went through during this week in the jungle, upset him for life, and he had in consequence to leave the service when

he had only qualified for a very small pension. Strange to say, almost in the act of inditing these lines, the sad news reaches me of the death of this old friend and brother officer at Brussels, on February 5, 1898, where for some years past he had been living quietly with his wife and youngest daughter. Thus well-nigh the last of the survivors associated with me in the horrors enacted inside the city of Delhi on May 11, 1857, has disappeared from the scenes; and I believe I am correct in saying that, with the exception of myself, there is not a single British officer now alive who witnessed the murderous episode at the Cashmere Gate which has been described in the foregoing pages.

CHAPTER XI.

RETURN TO DELHI.

In a few days I found myself appointed in Meerut Division orders to do duty with the Garrison Artillery, and I continued for several weeks to take my share of picket duty together with the other Gunner Officers, in the various intrenched posts erected for the protection of the station. About the beginning of July, ominous rumours reached Meerut of a great disaster at Cawnpore, and as my father, the late Major E. Vibart—was in command of the 2nd Light Cavalry at that place, and my family were residing with him, I was kept in a state of intense suspense regarding their fate. Shortly after, these reports were fully confirmed, and there was no room left for doubt but that all

the Europeans at that ill-fated station had been foully massacred. Feeling quite heart-broken at this dreadful intelligence, and yearning for active service against the mutineers, I at once volunteered to join the besieging army before Delhi, and, my offer being accepted, I hastily made my preparations, bought a tent and a stout pony, and with a *khidmutgar* and *bhistie* (water-carrier) for servants, started within forty-eight hours for the camp *via* the ferry over the Jumna at a place called Baghput. A few other officers, amongst whom were Craigie and Mackenzie, of the 3rd Light Cavalry, happened about this time to be bound on the same errand, so we all joined forces and travelled together.

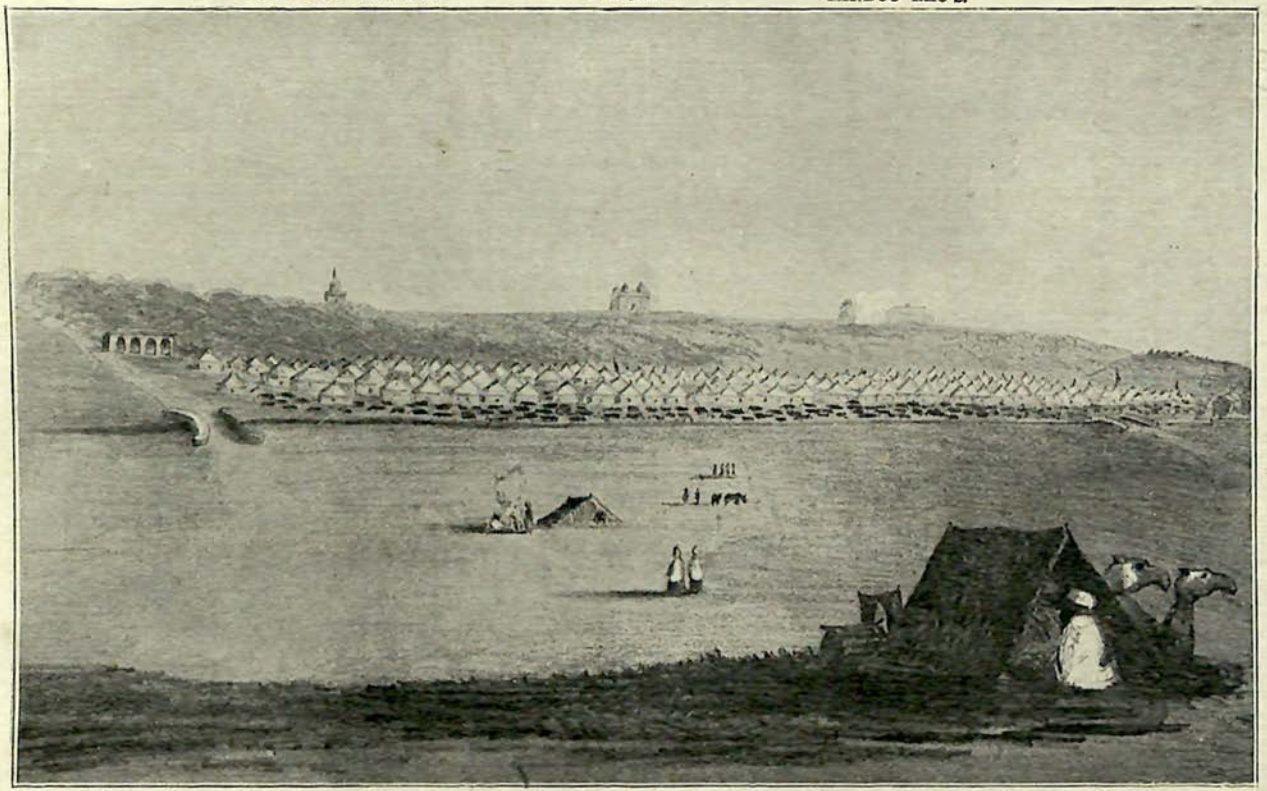
As the district between Meerut and Baghput was in a more or less disturbed condition, owing to frequent inroads by bands of mutineers from Delhi, as well as being infested by the villanous Goojurs, we deemed it advisable to make the journey to Baghput in one stage; so, starting one evening, we marched all night, and fortunately succeeded in reaching the ferry

by dawn next morning, without adventure of any kind. After halting under the shade of some trees near the banks of the river during the heat of the day, we prepared to cross over the same afternoon, and for this purpose one of the usual flat-bottomed ferry-boats was placed at our disposal. These boats are very shallow considering their size, and being provided with large prows, which project some ten or twelve feet out of the water, have a most unwieldy appearance; nevertheless, it is astonishing how skilfully they can be steered by natives, with the aid of huge barge poles, across the swiftest current and through the most intricate channels. Our embarkation, however, was not unattended with disaster, as during the course of it Captain Craigie had the misfortune to lose his charger —a handsome grey Arab—which, hampered with his trappings and a standing martingale to boot (which the owner had by some oversight omitted to unfasten), fell into the deep water at the edge of the bank as it tried to jump into the boat. The martingale unfortunately effectually prevented the poor animal from keeping his head

above water, and we saw its struggling body gradually carried down the stream until at last it sank to rise no more. By this untoward mishap poor Craigie not only lost all his regimental saddlery, but his revolver as well, which had been left in one of the holsters. On disembarking from the boat on the other side of the river, we found we had to cross a broad belt of sand before gaining the opposite bank; and here one of our party, in attempting to make a short cut instead of keeping to the beaten track, rode straight into a quicksand, in which he helplessly floundered about for a considerable time, until, hearing his shouts for assistance, we eventually succeeded in extricating both horse and rider from their dangerous predicament. The old familiar adage anent "the shortest cuts" not being always the safest and best, was never more aptly illustrated than in this particular instance. At length we all reached *terra firma*, and having procured a country steed for Craigie—a sorry substitute for his valuable charger — we continued our journey towards Delhi, and marching again throughout

the entire night, arrived in its vicinity early the next morning.

And now, as we approached the cantonment, and, from some rising ground near the race-course, caught our first glimpse of the British encampment lying spread out before us, with its long rows of white tents stretching along the entire length of the ruined station, with the famous "Ridge" forming a picturesque background, my thoughts instinctively reverted to that never-to-be-forgotten evening when, as one of that small band of hunted fugitives, I had last seen this same cantonment blazing from end to end with incendiary fires, and from the precincts of which, with the triumphant shouts of the mutineers ringing in our ears, I and my companions, expecting every moment to be overtaken and slain, had stealthily crept away under cover of the sheltering darkness. The scene had indeed changed since that terrible night, and, as my eye now rested on the huge canvas city tenanted by the besieging force, and I listened to the occasional boom of our heavy guns from our batteries in position



THE BRITISH CAMP, DELHI, SKETCHED FROM THE LEFT REAR.

(*From Brevet-Major Turnbull's "Sketches of Delhi, taken during the Siege." By permission of T. McLean, Esq.*)

at Hindoo Rao's and other coigns of vantage on the ridge, my heart thrilled with a feeling of intense satisfaction at the thought that I, too, was about to take my humble share in the forthcoming assault of the formidable fortress which frowned in our front, and within whose walls, bristling with innumerable cannon, and with an enormous arsenal at their disposal, upwards of twenty thousand of our blood-thirsty foes were bidding defiance to the British arms.

As soon as our party arrived in camp we at once proceeded to report ourselves to Lieutenant Norman (now Sir Henry Norman, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.), the Assistant Adjutant-General of the force, and, being there and then furnished with an order directing me to do duty with the 1st Bengal European Fusiliers, my tent in a very short interval was pitched in their camp, and I became for the time being an integral portion of the famous "Dirty Shirts," a name cherished with pride by the regiment ever since the memorable days in the trenches before Bhurtpore, when, owing to the unremitting

activity of the men in the performance of their duties, they had not found time to change their clothes for several weeks, and Lord Lake had approvingly remarked, "that the dirty state of their shirts was an honour to the wearers." *

* *Vide* "History of the Bengal European Regiment," by Colonel Innes.

CHAPTER XII.

INCIDENTS OF THE SIEGE.

On the afternoon of my arrival at the camp I naturally went to have a look at the ruins of my old bungalow, and see if any relics of my property could be discovered; but I found it a complete wreck, the roof having fallen in, and the whole of the interior choked with rubbish, the bare calcined walls being alone left standing. Every house in the station had been similarly burned and gutted. Whilst sauntering round the compound I suddenly heard, some distance above my head, a sound as of something rushing through the air, similar to that made by a large kite as, with outstretched pinions, he swoops down on his prey, and, looking up, I observed a slight explosion

in the sky followed by a sharp report, and the next instant down came the iron fragments of a shell, which tore up the ground round about. This shell had most probably been fired from the enemy's mortar batteries in the neighbourhood of the Cashmere Gate, and had travelled a distance of at least two miles. The incident is absolutely trivial in itself, and scarcely worth recording even from a personal point of view, considering how very shortly I was to make a much closer acquaintance with these formidable projectiles, and it is merely referred to here to show the enormous range of the rebel artillery, to whose destructive fire, owing to an insufficiency of heavy guns at our disposal at this period of the siege, we could but very inadequately respond.

Talking of shell-fire, I recollect on one occasion—but this happened during the last week of the operations—I was standing one night with a working party of the 1st E.B.F., drawn up on the road just opposite Ludlow Castle, when I saw a fiery ball shoot up from the interior of the city, and, after describing

a rainbow-shaped arc in the sky, rapidly approach straight in our direction. We breathlessly watched its descent, and in a few seconds it alighted within half a dozen yards of where we were standing, striking the ground just beneath a pair of oxen which were attached to a cart laden with ordnance stores. As it rebounded off the road from under their bodies it burst with a loud crash; but, fortunately, the splinters were thrown forwards, and not a man was touched, although both bullocks collapsed in a heap, and we thought they were blown to atoms. On going up to the cart, however, we found the animals absolutely uninjured. In the whole course of the campaign I never witnessed a more marvellous incident, and I dare say there are still some officers of the Fusiliers who may recollect the extraordinary occurrence I have just related.

Perhaps some of my readers may like to know if I ever came across any of the sepoys of my late regiment during the course of the campaign. With the exception of one instance, which will be related further on, I cannot say

that I ever did so; but I was told by an officer of the Fusiliers that, on one occasion during the early part of the siege, a small party of the regiment pursued some twenty-five or thirty mutineers into an enclosure, in the centre of which was a temple built on a raised masonry platform several feet high. For some minutes this detachment, which consisted of a sergeant and about a dozen men, chased the sepoys round and round the platform without being able to come to close quarters, when, at last, becoming tired of the fruitless pursuit, the non-commissioned officer, who was evidently a man of resource, divided his party into two sections, and, promptly facing about, caught the rebels between two fires, and shot and bayoneted every one of them. Hearing of this, my informant went to the place and, from the number on their caps, found they were all men of the 54th N.I. It was a satisfaction to think that some, at any rate, of the faithless scoundrels of my regiment had thus accounted with their lives for their treacherous conduct at Delhi on May 11. It may be mentioned that when

the mutineers came out to fight, their lower limbs were usually encased in *dhotees* (loose folds of coarse, unbleached cotton girt about the loins, leaving the calves and ankles entirely free), but retaining for the most part their regimental caps and tunics.

Although I was only present during the last six weeks of the siege, yet as I enjoyed good health throughout that period, and was never once on the sick list, I was enabled to take my full share of duty at the outposts, and I think there were very few of our outlying picquets, except of course Hindoo Rao's (which was held from first to last by the gallant little Goorkhas under Major Reid) and the breastworks in its immediate front, at which I did not put in an appearance more than once. These picquets stretched across the whole length of the position, from Metcalfe's house, abutting on the Jumna on the left, to the Crow's Nest and Subzi Mundi Serai on our extreme right. The favourite picquets were those at the Flagstaff Tower and the Mosque, as from their elevated position on the ridge, a splendid view

could be obtained of the stretch of ground in front right up to the fortified walls of the city; and, moreover, not being subject to sudden alarms, we used to enjoy a comparatively restful night. The picquet I most disliked was the one posted on the race-course in rear of the camp, as here we had no excitement of any kind to relieve our monotony, and although tents were erected for the accommodation of the men, the heat at times was unbearable. Besides which we were tormented with a plague of flies, and the odour from the carcases of dead animals strewn all about the place was simply dreadful.

One day, whilst on duty at the Mosque, I witnessed a daring reconnoissance made by Hodson, the brave and energetic leader of a body of Sikh horsemen recently raised by himself, as well as the head of the Intelligence Department at the Delhi camp, in the direction of Ludlow Castle. We first saw him descend the ridge accompanied by three of his sowars (all on foot), and then disappear in a ravine which ran along its base. Presently a solitary figure, whom we at once recognized as Hodson,

emerged from the nullah a little lower down and cautiously crept across the open ground beyond it on all fours. It was really quite exciting to see him crawling along on his hands and knees, especially when it was seen that Ludlow Castle was crowded with sepoys, who, having evidently caught sight of him, could be distinctly observed through a telescope craning their necks over each other's heads, intently watching his movements. Hodson had meanwhile gained the cover of a hedge, and going through this was lost to view. At the same moment we were greatly relieved to see his escort leave the shelter of the ravine, and follow in his wake. The rebels were now literally swarming in the verandah of Ludlow Castle, and presented such a tempting target that we tried to persuade the artillery officer in charge of two field guns placed behind a breastwork in front of the Mosque, to let fly at them with a shell, but he thought the distance too far. We all began to think Hodson might get cut off, as he was a long way in advance of our line of picquets, and within only a few hundred yards of the

enemy; at Ludlow Castle, but after a short interval we saw the entire party retiring towards Hindoo Rao's, and our excitement came to an end. There were few bolder men than Hodson in camp, or one who was more to be depended upon to carry out successfully a dangerous duty.

On August 14, the Punjab movable column, numbering some four thousand men, amongst them being that splendid regiment, the 52nd Light Infantry, marched into camp under the command of the famous General John Nicholson. How well I remember seeing his tall commanding figure riding along at the head of his men, and as we stood by the roadside and cheered each regiment as with confident demeanour, and a long swinging stride, it filed into camp, the predominant feeling in our minds was one of supreme elation at the thought that with the arrival of this additional reinforcement and its masterful leader, a victorious issue of the long protracted struggle was at length assured for the British arms, and the fate of Delhi irrevocably sealed!

This being merely a narrative of my own personal reminiscences during the Mutiny campaign of 1857–58, I may here state that I am not going to weary the reader by entering into detailed particulars of the progress of the siege, the splendid achievements of the Delhi Field Force being far too well known to require recapitulation at my hands. Suffice it, therefore, to say that I continued to serve with the gallant Fusiliers throughout the remainder of the operations against the doomed city, taking part amongst other less notable affairs in the battle of Nujjufghur, fought on August 25, 1857, where, after a long and trying march across country inundated by recent heavy rains, a force despatched from camp, under the leadership of the heroic General Nicholson, completely defeated the rebels, capturing thirteen guns, and driving them back in hopeless confusion to the walls of Delhi.

Shortly before the commencement of this fight, I remember, the troops had to wade across a broad sheet of water, which in some places nearly reached up to our waists; after

negotiating which obstacle we came upon a large serai, or walled enclosure, strongly held by the rebels with infantry and guns. A column composed of ourselves, a wing of Her Majesty's 61st Foot and the 2nd Punjab Infantry, was then told off to attack it, and, having advanced to a point about three hundred yards from the building, we were directed to deploy, halt, and lie down, while the General and his staff rode out to the front to reconnoitre the position. Immediately afterwards a Battery of Horse Artillery galloped up, and, unlimbering at close range, poured in a heavy fire of round shot for a few minutes on that face of the serai which fronted us. The order was then given to the attacking column to stand up, and having fixed bayonets, the three regiments, led by General Nicholson in person, steadily advanced in an almost unbroken line to within about one hundred yards of the enclosure, when the word of command rang out from our commanding officer, Major Jacob, "Prepare to charge!" "Charge!" and in less time than it takes to relate it, we had scaled the walls, carried the serai, and

captured all the guns by which it was defended. Only a few of the rebels fought with any pluck, and these were seen standing on the walls, loading and firing with the greatest deliberation until we were close upon them. But few of these escaped, as they were nearly all bayoneted within the enclosure. During the advance I had a narrow escape from being hit, a bullet striking the blade of my sword a few inches above the hilt, the impact creating a jar which nearly knocked it out of my hand. At the same instant I heard a soldier in the ranks just behind me shout out, "Thank you, sir, that saved me;" and possibly, had the course of the bullet not been diverted, it might, as he seemed to think, have pierced his body.

The troops were now reformed outside the serai, and pursued the enemy in full retreat across an open plain towards the bridge over the canal cut which drains the Nujjufgurh lake; and here, darkness setting in, we bivouacked for the night without food or covering of any kind, having captured the whole of

their baggage, tents and ammunition, and all except two of their guns.

A fortnight later, that is to say on September 7, the siege train from Ferozepore having meanwhile arrived, the first siege batteries against the walls of Delhi were traced out and constructed, and from that date to the 12th—on which day the whole of the batteries were completed and in full play on the different points intended to be breached, viz. the Moree, the Cashmere, and the water Bastions, together with the intervening curtains—the 1st Fusiliers were incessantly employed either as covering parties, or working in the trenches filling sand bags, gabions, etc., under the orders and superintendence of the engineers. On the evening of the 12th, however, the 1st E.B.F. were relieved from all duties, and for the first time since the commencement of the siege, the entire regiment slept in camp. The next day (13th) we were practised in escalading for several hours, and towards evening it became generally known that the assault would take place at daybreak the following morning.

As already stated, it does not enter into the scope of this narrative to follow in detail the fortunes of the several columns which were told off for the assault, as every one versed in the military annals of that stirring period is thoroughly familiar with the varying incidents of this memorable day; so merely confining myself to a short summary of the doings of my own regiment, I will just mention that the 1st Bengal Fusiliers formed part of No. 1 column, which was led by General Nicholson in person, and were foremost in the assault on the breach at the Cashmere Bastion (the leading company of the regiment carrying the scaling ladders), the storm of the Church, and the subsequent advance along the ramparts up to the Moree Bastion and Caubul Gate, both of which were captured after a desperate resistance, in which the regiment sustained heavy loss in both officers and men. Amongst the former I regret to say was our gallant commanding officer, Major Jacob, who was mortally wounded whilst charging at the head of his men up a narrow lane running along

the foot of the walls between the Caubul Gate and the Burn Bastion. It was near this spot also that the lamented General John Nicholson met with his death-wound, in the act of cheering on the men to make a renewed attempt to capture the latter position, which, swarming with sepoys ensconced behind a bullet-proof screen drawn across the rampart, and flanked by guns which swept with grape the narrow roadway underneath (by which alone the bastion could be approached), effectually resisted all our efforts to take it.

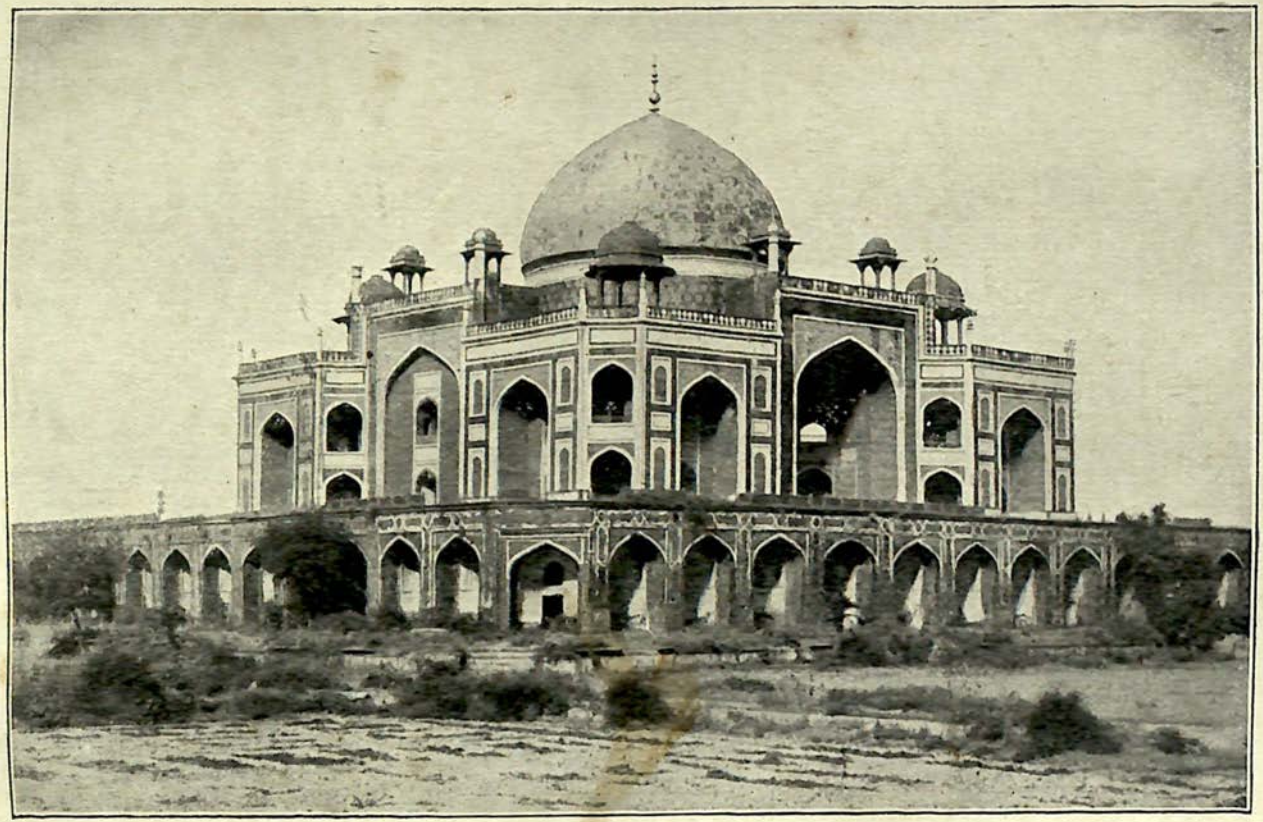
That night the assaulting columns bivouacked on the positions they had won, but there is no doubt that for the next twenty-four hours the situation was extremely critical; so much so that the General, Sir Archdale Wilson, absolutely lost heart, and at one time actually contemplated withdrawing the troops from the positions we had gained within the walls. Happily, wiser counsels prevailed, and our grip on the city was never relaxed (see Appendix B).

On the 15th no further advance was made, but on this date a most deplorable *contretemps*

occurred by the bursting of a shell in a small room where the daily rations were being served out for the regiment; no less than nine out of twelve men, including the Canteen Sergeant, being killed on the spot.

For the next few days the 1st E.B.F. were chiefly engaged in working cautiously through the streets, and sapping gradually from house to house, in the course of which we frequently found ourselves on one side of a brick wall with the enemy facing us on the other. The *modus operandi* was as follows. The engineers would first break through the wall of a house, which we at once proceeded to occupy, and then carrying sand-bags to the top of the roof would construct a parapet, from behind which a covering fire was kept up on the next house to be taken. Occasionally some awkward street fighting took place amongst the numerous narrow streets and tortuous lanes which abound in the native city of Delhi, and on one of these occasions during an attempt made to seize the Lahore Gate by a small force under Colonel Greathead of the 8th Foot, I was directed, with

a company of my regiment, to occupy some buildings overlooking the street down which the column charged in a hopeless endeavour to capture a twenty-four-pounder howitzer which was posted at the other end. I had no sooner got my men on the roofs of the houses, when looking down I saw our soldiers falling back, followed by overwhelming numbers of the enemy; so there was nothing left for us to do but to scramble down as fast as possible to avoid being cut off. Fortunately we all got back into the street just in time to check the rebels and cover the retirement to our original position.



HUMAYOON'S TOMB.

CHAPTER XIII.

AFTER THE CAPTURE.

At length, on the 20th of September, the city was entirely cleared of the mutineers, and Delhi was once more in our possession, after a siege which had lasted close upon three and a half months in the hottest and most trying season of the year, and during which the 1st Bengal Fusiliers had lost in killed and wounded alone, fourteen officers and 305 men, besides two officers and fifty-four men who died from cholera and other diseases. On the 21st the aged King of Delhi was captured at Humayoon's Tomb, a few miles from the city, on the road to the well-known Kootub Minar, by a daring act on the part of the renowned Hodson; and on the following day his two sons and grandson were also

seized and shot by the same officer. The particulars of these exploits are too well known for me to refer to them here; but perhaps it will not be uninteresting to relate a visit which I had the curiosity one day to pay his late Imperial Majesty in the wretched little house in which he was confined. At the door stood an European sentry, but I had no difficulty in gaining admittance, and there I saw, sitting cross-legged on a native bedstead, on which he was rocking himself to and fro, a small and attenuated old man apparently between eighty and ninety years of age, with a long white beard, and almost totally blind. He was repeating to himself, in a low but audible murmur, some verses of the Koran, or it may be of some of his own poetical compositions—for he aspired to be a poet —and he certainly looked an object of pity and compassion. Whatever his reflections were at the moment, they must surely have been of an exceptionally sad nature; and not feeling inclined to disturb them by making any remarks, I merely stood and gazed for a while in silence on this woe-begone picture of fallen greatness,

and then left the poor old man still mumbling to himself in the solitude of his dreary apartment.

I may state *en passant* that the old king was subsequently arraigned before a Military Commission which was assembled at Delhi on the 27th day of January, 1858, upon a charge of rebellion, treason and murder. The following was the composition of the Court:—

President:

Lieut.-Colonel Dawes, Horse Artillery.

Members:

Major Palmer, H.M. 60th Rifles.

Major Redmond, H.M. 61st Foot.

Major Sawyer, H.M. 6th Carbineers.

Captain Rothney, 4th Sikh Infantry.

Interpreter:

Mr. James Murphy.

Prosecutor for Government:

Major F. J. Harriott, Deputy Judge Advocate General.

After a lengthy trial he was found guilty on every charge, and was directed by the Government of India to be transported to Rangoon in

British Burmah, whither he was accompanied in his banishment by all the surviving members of his immediate family circle, numbering some twenty-six individuals in all. Here they all lived in tents, surrounded by a wooden palisade erected for their accommodation adjoining the guard house of H.M.'s 68th Regiment, and by all accounts their treatment was the reverse of that usually accorded to prisoners of royal lineage. With reference to this famous trial, it may be noted that there never was a more extraordinarily constituted court convened for a great State trial. It will be observed that four of the officers who sat on the court were serving with British troops of whom the President alone could have been familiar with the Hindoostani language. It was said that no other officers were available, unless civilians had been appointed, and possibly none of them at this time could have been spared by the Punjab Government.

Before taking leave of his titular Majesty, who did not survive his captivity very long, it may be mentioned that on being questioned one

day by a distinguished officer of the 68th Regiment, as to the cause of the dreadful atrocities committed at Delhi during the mutiny, the old man shrewdly replied, "I don't know; I suppose my people gave themselves up to the devil." I think it will be conceded that His Majesty's observation was not very wide of the mark, and that he showed himself fully equal to the occasion!

I also saw the dead bodies of the three princes whom Hodson, as before stated, had shot with his own hand, exposed to public view for two days at the Kotwallie or chief police-station in the Chandnee Chowk, the principal street of the city. In one of them I recognized the Shahzada, or heir-apparent, whom I used frequently to meet at picnics and luncheon parties given by the officers of the Delhi garrison, and who often took part with us in rifle competitions and pigeon shooting. Hodson's action in taking the law into his own hands on this occasion has been the subject of much adverse comment, and personally I cannot but agree with those who have

condemned it as a most injudicious act. Some days later I was present when two more princes of the royal house were shot by a platoon of European soldiers, on the sand-bank in front of the palace, and their bodies afterwards thrown into the river. Indeed, for several weeks subsequent to the capture of the city, wholesale executions of mutineers and other rebels were carried out almost daily. These wretches used to be strung up on a gallows erected for the purpose on a platform in front of the Kotwallee, in batches of a dozen at a time, and once being on guard with a company of the Fusiliers at this post, I was an enforced spectator of the horrid scene. Doubtless the majority of them had well merited their doom by the perpetration of murders and other diabolical cruelties on Europeans and native Christians in the early days of the outbreak, besides which a severe example was undoubtedly necessary to instill terror into the minds of the wavering and those still bent on defying our authority. On the 23rd September, poor General Nicholson succumbed to the wound he received on the day

of the assault, to the profound regret of the whole force—indeed, it may justly be said, of every Englishman in India—and the following day was buried with military honours in the new cemetery, a short distance outside the city walls, and within sight of the breach, which as a writer has recently observed, "witnessed the crowning achievement of his life."

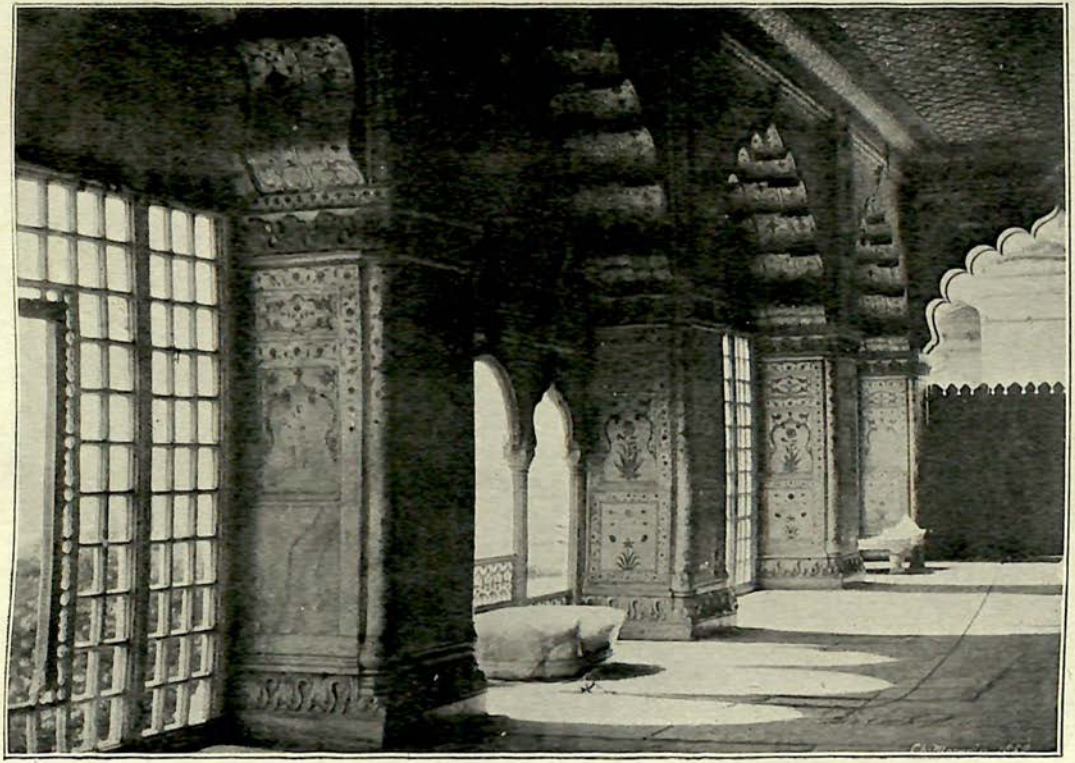
Previous to the storm of Delhi, prize agents had been appointed and strict orders issued prohibiting promiscuous looting, and at the same time directing that all property and valuables found in the city should be at once made over to the Prize Committee. On the conclusion of the siege duly authorized passes were also issued to any officers desirous of assisting in the search for hidden treasure; so one day, armed with one of these passes, Lieutenant Butler, 1st B.F., and I, attended by a few men provided with pickaxes and spades, proceeded on a voyage of discovery, and for this purpose we decided to explore some deserted shops in the streets leading out of

the Chandnee Chowk. In the course of our explorations we came across a wall in a back room of one of these shops, which had evidently been quite recently plastered up, and we at once set to work to pull it down. A few strokes from a pick soon exposed the interior of the wall to view, and here to our astonishment we found some thirteen or fourteen wooden boxes filled with all kinds of gold and silver articles, coins and precious stones of more or less value. Delighted at our success, we caused all the boxes to be taken at once to Captain Wriford, one of the members of the Prize Committee, who, to recompense us for our trouble, said we might each select a few little things to keep as a memento of our haul. It was rather a difficult matter to know what to choose, but seeing one large box filled to the brim with some splendid "carbuncles," I pulled out for myself a handful of about a dozen fairly large-sized stones, which I eventually took home with me to England a few years afterwards, and had them set in gold as brooches, studs, and rings, as presents to my

relations. What Butler took I cannot remember, but I can honestly say that this was the only "loot" of any sort that I ever appropriated during the whole course of the Mutiny campaign, and it has ever remained a matter of regret to me that I did not take advantage of such an excellent opportunity to select something of greater value!

About this time I was agreeably surprised one morning to receive an invitation requesting my presence at Meerut, for the purpose of attending the wedding of the eldest Miss Forrest to Lieutenant M. Procter, one of the officers who had escaped with our party from Delhi on the day of the outbreak; so, notwithstanding the regiment was held in readiness to proceed on active service, I succeeded in obtaining three days' leave of absence in order to witness the interesting ceremony. As this wedding had all the elements of romance attaching to it, a large company assembled to see it, and wish the bride and bridegroom "God speed." For a long while after this I entirely lost sight of the Procters; but some

time during the "seventies" I unexpectedly came across my old friends and quondam fellow-fugitives at Bara Bunki, in Oudh, where Colonel Procter then held the appointment of District Superintendent of Police, and was the happy father of a numerous family. It is many years now since my old friend passed over to the great majority, but it is pleasant to be able to add that Mrs. Procter is still alive and in the enjoyment of good health. It may not be devoid of interest to mention in this connection that both her sisters were also, a few years later, respectively married to Lieutenant Forbes, of the Bengal Sappers and Miners, and Captain Engledue, of the Royal Engineers; but the youngest, Mrs. Engledue, to my great regret, I never had the pleasure of meeting again, for she died at an early age. Of the officers who composed our little band of fugitives, the gallant Salkeld, as previously mentioned, succumbed to the wounds he received whilst in command of the explosion party which blew in the Cashmere Gate, and another, poor Gambier, after serving at the siege of Delhi with the



THE DEWAN KHAS, OR PRIVATE HALL OF AUDIENCE.

Round the walls of this apartment, above the arches, which are inlaid with black marble, are these celebrated words written in Persian "If there be an Elysium on Earth, it is this—it is this!"

2nd Bengal European Fusiliers, was killed on the day of the assault.

Of the remainder, all are long since dead and gone, and, as has been already stated, I am now the only officer of the party who is still alive.

CHAPTER XIV.

NARNOUL AND THE DOAB.

A DAY or two after my return from Meerut, the 1st E.B.F., forming part of a mixed column, two thousand five hundred strong, marched from Delhi under Colonel Gerrard (who had been appointed to the command of the regiment on the death of Major Jacob), to attack the mutinied troops of the Jodhpore Legion, which had recently invaded the district of Rewarri to the south of Delhi, and re-establish order in that province. At midday on November 16, 1857, we came up with the rebels, advancing to meet us in considerable force across a large plain, two miles in front of the town of Narnoul. Colonel Gerrard at once formed up the force in fighting order, and, whilst the Carbineers

and Guides successfully charged and overthrew the enemy's cavalry threatening our right flank, the Fusiliers advanced against the guns in the centre, several of which were captured by the regiment, and the rebels driven back in headlong flight on the Fort of Narnoul, which was hastily evacuated on our approach, and occupied by our troops without further opposition of any moment. Their camp was also taken.

This action was one of the prettiest engagements I have ever witnessed, as it was fought on one of those bright November days, so typical of the commencement of the cold season in the North-West Provinces of India, with a crisp invigorating feeling in the air, and a perfectly cloudless sky. As there was no dust to obscure the view previous to the collision, the contending forces could be distinctly seen approaching each other from either end of the plain, an interval of less than a mile separating one from the other; and it was a spectacle I shall long remember. Unfortunately this brilliant affair was marred by the death of our commander, Colonel Gerrard, who was mortally

wounded, almost at the close of the engagement, by a shot fired by a sepoy hidden in a ravine, whilst the Colonel, conspicuous on his white charger and bright scarlet uniform, was halting for a few moments on its brink, watching through a field-glass the advance of the troops. I was informed by the late Captain Hogg, who was acting as the Colonel's orderly officer, that Colonel Gerrard's valuable life would not have been sacrificed on this occasion had he only moved away from the edge of the ravine after the rebel sepoy had fired his first shot at him and missed; but, although warned of his danger by Captain Hogg, and entreated to rein back a few paces, he insisted on remaining until he had seen Cookworthy's troop of Horse Artillery come into position, thus giving the sepoy time to reload his musket and fire again, this time with such deadly effect.

Only a few minutes previous to the occurrence of the tragic event just related, Colonel Gerrard, highly elated with his success, had been engaged in animated conversation with Captain Cookworthy regarding the able manner

in which that officer had handled his battery throughout the engagement, and then, having given some further directions for its advance in pursuit of the fleeing rebels, he was in the act of cantering off, when, turning round in his saddle, he shouted to Cookworthy, "This will be a C.B. for me; and, anyhow, you may depend upon my not forgetting you!" The interval which elapsed between this conversation with Cookworthy and that officer being told that poor Gerrard had been mortally wounded was so short, that, as he himself informed me, he was completely staggered by the intelligence, and at first refused to credit it. There is no doubt that, had Colonel Gerrard lived, he would have risen to high distinction in the service, as he was undoubtedly an able officer, and his cheery, affable manners rendered him extremely popular amongst all ranks.

Amongst other miscellaneous articles found by our men in the rebel camp, there was a nice double-barrelled gun by a good English maker, which had fallen to the lot of a man in my company, who, knowing I was fond of shooting,

offered to let me have it for any little sum I might choose to give him. As I had lost all my property at the outbreak at Delhi, and was therefore minus a fowling-piece of any kind, I gladly accepted his offer, and presented him in return with forty rupees, which by the profuse way in which he thanked me, calling me "a rale genilmun," etc., apparently far exceeded his utmost expectations. As for myself, I had obtained a good weapon for a comparatively small amount, so we were both mutually pleased with our bargain. As numerous flocks of sand-grouse were to be seen daily in the vicinity of camp, I had not long to wait before testing its shooting capabilities, which turned out highly satisfactory, and I kept the weapon in my possession for several years, until in fact I returned to England, and replaced it with a breechloader.

A few days later the column returned to Delhi, and shortly after the 1st Fusiliers were detailed to form part of the force ordered to proceed under the command of Colonel Seaton, C.B. (afterwards Sir Thomas Seaton, K.C.B.), to drive out the rebels from the Doab, or country

lying between the Ganges and Jumna, and effect a junction with the British troops then being concentrated at Cawnpore, under Sir Colin Campbell, for the final assault on Lucknow. An immense convoy, consisting of about five thousand carts laden with stores of every description, eight thousand camels, and eighty elephants, all destined for the use of Sir Colin's army, was confided to the care of the column; so it will be seen at a glance that the enterprise was one of no little difficulty and importance.

On the march down the rebel forces were encountered in rapid succession on the 14th, 17th, and 21st days of December, at Gungeerie, Puttialie, and Mynpoorie; on each of which occasions all their guns were captured, and hundreds slain in pursuit by the Carbineers and Hodson's horse. The former of these engagements was notable for a gallant charge made by a squadron of the Carbineers on two guns in position amongst some low sand-hills, when three out of the four officers who accompanied it into action were killed on the spot, namely, Captain Wardlaw, and Lieutenants Hudson and

Vyse; the fourth and only officer who survived the charge being Lieutenant Russell (the present Sir W. Baker Russell, K.C.B.).

During the course of this march I witnessed the execution of a notorious traitor by the dread ordeal of being blown from the mouth of a gun. The culprit was an old pensioned native officer who had served the Government for forty years, and was not only in receipt of the pension of his rank, but the emoluments derived from the order of British India as well. Notwithstanding this, he and his two sons had joined the rebel ranks on the outbreak of the mutiny, and all three had just fought against us at Puttialie. Thus he was no ordinary rebel, but a traitor of the deepest dye. He was cleverly captured by Hodson whilst hiding in his village a few days after the fight, and being duly arraigned before a military commission, was condemned to suffer death by being blown from a gun. The sentence was carried out one afternoon, in the presence of all the troops, who were paraded for the purpose; and certainly no more awful-looking spectacle than this mode of execution

can well be imagined—though death itself must be practically painless—or one more calculated to impress awe in the eyes of the beholder. It was the first, and I am glad to think the last, execution of the kind I have ever witnessed.

On December 30, whilst encamped at Mynpoorie, the intrepid Hodson, accompanied by Lieutenant Macdowell, his second in command, and a small party of his own men, started off on one of his usual enterprising expeditions in order to open up communications with the Commander-in-Chief, who, we had been informed, had arrived with a large force at a place called Goorsahaigunge, on the Grand Trunk road, about forty miles distant, on his way to Futtehgurh. After riding thirty miles, Hodson found Sir Colin's camp was still twenty miles further ahead, and as the horses of his escort were greatly fatigued, he left the majority of the detachment at the town of Chibbramow, and pushed forward at once with only Macdowell and a few sowars for the remainder of his journey. The next intelligence we received about him was, that after his departure from Chibbramow a large body of

rebels had entered the town, and surprised and cut up the detachment; and as it seemed by no means improbable that Hodson himself, on his way back from the chief's camp, might also be waylaid by the mutineers, Colonel Seaton, naturally alarmed for his safety, determined to start at an early hour and make a forced march. We had not proceeded far, however, when, to the inexpressible relief of every one, a messenger from Hodson galloped up to the head of the column, and reported that, having been warned by a friendly villager of the danger which awaited him, he had succeeded in eluding the rebels by making a slight detour off the main road, having actually passed within earshot of their camp, and seen their watch-fires burning as he stealthily rode past in the dark. On the arrival of the column at Bewur, where we pitched our camp for the day, we found the gallant Hodson awaiting us, none the worse for his long and adventurous ride, and the bearer of a congratulatory message from Sir Colin, on the brilliant success which had attended our march through the Doab. With the exception of a

short stay in the chief's camp, Hodson had ridden nearly sixty miles in ten hours without changing horses, and thus had accomplished another of those daring feats so characteristic of this dashing soldier, and which have rendered his name so justly famous in the annals of the Indian Mutiny.

On January 4, 1858, the column reached Futtehgurh, where we found Sir Colin Campbell had arrived the previous day and occupied the fort, having forced the passage of the Kali Nuddee with Walpole's Division on the 2nd, and routed the rebel Nawab, who had thereupon crossed the Ganges and fled into Rohilcund. Colonel Seaton's column was now broken up, and a number of officers belonging to the 1st Fusiliers, having joined the regiment from England, and the services of attached officers being no longer in urgent request, I was transferred under orders from Army Head-Quarters to the 2nd Punjab Infantry, commanded by Major Green, and my connection with the gallant Fusiliers—which had lasted for a period of between five and six months—was brought

to an end. During this time I had served with them through many a hard day's (and night's) work in the breastworks and trenches before Delhi, and since the day of the assault, owing to the large number of casualties amongst the officers, I had been placed in command of No. 9 company. Thus I was naturally sorry to bid good-bye to a regiment with which I had become so closely identified in the field. At this time the strength of the regiment did not exceed three hundred and eighty men all told; but when, a couple of months later, I happened to come across my old comrades during the final operations before Lucknow, I was glad to find they had received a substantial reinforcement in the shape of nearly two hundred fine recruits, armed with the Enfield rifle, who had joined the regiment on its way through Cawnpore, under the command of that smart officer, Captain F. O. Salusbury—now Major-General Salusbury, C.B. These recruits, whom the energetic efforts of that officer had succeeded in making thoroughly efficient in the use of the new weapon, by a course of rifle practice before

leaving Calcutta, in addition to daily drills whilst travelling up country, were at once admitted into the ranks, and proved a valuable acquisition to the regiment at this juncture, the rest of the men of course being only armed with the old Brown Bess. I do not think I have ever seen it mentioned, that, during the cold weather of 1857–58, the regiment was clothed in blue tunics, as owing to the great demand created in England by the recent Crimean War for the regulation scarlet, the Indian Government had been unable just then to procure a sufficient quantity of that material to clothe all its European troops, and consequently a supply of blue cloth was served out to the 1st B.F., from which they were directed to make up their own tunics regimentally. The result was that the men were never better fitted, or looked smarter; and when the regiment was inspected by Sir Colin Campbell, soon after our arrival at Futtehgurh, I know he was greatly taken by the appearance of the men in their new blue uniform. These tunics were, however, discarded after the regiment had worn

them for two years, when they reverted to the old-established red.

The short time during which the troops were encamped at Futtehgurh was a period of complete rest, and advantage was taken of it to get up games and regimental sports of different kinds for the amusement of the men. Some officers indeed were fortunate enough to obtain ten days' leave to visit their belongings up country, at the stations of Meerut, Umballa, and elsewhere, preparatory to donning harness once more for the great struggle still impending in Oudh and Rohilcund.

CHAPTER XV.

CAWNPORE.

After nearly a month's sojourn at Futtehgurh, the 2nd Punjab Infantry received orders to proceed to Cawnpore, on arrival at which place we encamped for some days on the huge plain facing the stately mansion known as the Savada Kothee, the special resort of the perfidious Nana and his myrmidons whilst prosecuting the siege of General Sir Hugh Wheeler's ill-starred intrenchments. The cantonment itself presented a most deplorable appearance, every house being more or less a mass of ruins. Scarcely ten months previous I had spent a happy month at this very station, whilst on a visit to my parents from Delhi, and little did I dream, when I wished them good-bye early in May, 1857, that not only

should I never see them again, but that within a week of my rejoining my regiment at Delhi the whole of the North-West Provinces was destined to be enveloped in the throes of a gigantic military rebellion, which gathering intensity as it spread throughout the native ranks, would rapidly set India in a blaze, and seriously imperil the stability of our rule in Hindoostan.

Before quitting Cawnpore I made the round of all the places rendered memorable by the terrible incidents of the mutiny at this ill-fated station, and the awful massacre which followed. The first spot I visited was the plain where the dilapidated remains of poor Sir Hugh Wheeler's so-called intrenchments were still visible, encircling with their feeble mud parapets the two roofless and shattered barracks in which some hundreds of our luckless countrywomen with their little ones had vainly huddled for shelter from the pitiless storm of shot and shell, which for the space of one and twenty days was unceasingly rained upon them. I next explored the fatal ravine leading down to the Suttee

THE BARRACK IN GENERAL WHEELER'S INTRENCHMENT AT CAWNPORE.

Chowra Ghaut, on the banks of the Ganges, where the remnant of the "immortal garrison," who had survived the horrors of that terrible three weeks' siege, were inveigled down by the treacherous sepoys and all but a moiety—reserved for a still more cruel fate a few weeks later on—foully massacred just as they were on the point of embarking on board the boats for Allahabad: and finally, I stood on the site of that house of horrors where, on the 15th July, 1857, only thirty-six hours previous to Sir Henry Havelock's entry into Cawnpore, two hundred defenceless ladies and children were barbarously done to death by orders of that fiend in human shape, the infamous Nana Sahib, of Bithoor, and thrown, the dying with the dead, into a well hard by (see Appendix C).

But these memories are too sad for me to dwell upon, and I gladly pass on to a short epitome of those stirring events in which I was about to take part with the avenging army under Sir Colin Campbell, for the final conquest of Lucknow.

I must not omit to mention that whilst at

Cawnpore I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mr. Russell, LL.D., the special correspondent of the *Times*, who had recently come out from England and joined the head-quarters' camp. I happened to be dining one evening at the civilians' mess, when amongst the assembled company I observed a rather stout and jovial-looking stranger, who entertained us during dinner with numerous racy anecdotes, and afterwards, when the cloth was removed, and pipes and cigars lit, sang in a rich bass voice an uncommonly good comic song. This was the famous war correspondent, whose graphic letters during both the Crimean and Mutiny campaigns were so much appreciated by the English public. He used to be seen riding about Cawnpore, clad in long boots and a shooting coat, and bestriding a varminty-looking white mare, which seemed at times quite a handful to manage. This same animal, by the way, nearly cost Mr. Russell his life whilst on the march one night between Cawnpore and Lucknow, when she bolted with him across a plain, and finally ended her gallop by depositing

him at the bottom of a dry watercourse, where he lay stunned until pulled out by a couple of soldiers. A most amusing account of this episode was written in his letters home at the time. Mr. Russell, as every one knows, is now Sir William Howard Russell, the honour of knighthood having recently been conferred upon him; and certainly it may be said that the distinction has been worthily earned, as it would be difficult to find amongst the hardworking members of the "fourth estate," one whose literary labours in his own special department have been wielded with greater effect for the public weal.

A day or two before leaving Cawnpore, I was riding one afternoon past the Judge's Kutcherry (Court House), in company of my friend Osborn, when we met a batch of prisoners in charge of some policemen being taken back to jail, some in leg-irons and handcuffed, others tied together with ropes round their arms, one of whom, as soon as he caught sight of us, made a supplicating gesture in our direction, and began calling out, "*Dohai, sahib, dohai!*" ("Mercy, sir,

mercy!"). On inquiry we ascertained he was a sepoy of the 54th N.I., who had just been sentenced to be hung by the civil judge as a mutineer, but vehemently protested his innocence. As we were both intimately acquainted with Mr. Power, the assistant judge, we mentioned the circumstance to him the same evening. He informed us that the culprit in question was on furlough in the Cawnpore district when the Mutiny broke out, and that he had not only failed to report himself to the nearest authorities, but that there was also good reason for believing that he had fought against us in the rebel ranks. This being so, he had justly merited his doom, and there was consequently no further excuse for interference in his behalf. This was the only occasion throughout the whole campaign on which I ever came face to face with a sepoy of my late regiment.

Talking of executions, a curious story was going the round of the station at this time, which, although it has been chronicled before, perhaps I may be excused for relating it once again.

A little native girl was missing from her home near Cawnpore. Suspicion fell on the mother, who at length, on her own confession that she had murdered the child by throwing her into the Ganges, was found guilty of the crime, and sentenced to death. Short shrift was allowed in those days to prisoners convicted of murder, so the next day the woman was brought out and duly hanged. A few hours afterwards—so the story goes—a child of tender years was found wandering about the station making pathetic inquiries for her mother, and on being taken to the court house, and confronted with the magistrate, it was ascertained that the wretched woman had been executed that same morning! Further investigation elicited the fact that after being thrown into the river the little creature had been carried down by the current, till at length it was washed on to a sandbank, where it was eventually discovered, still breathing, by a native fisherman, who kept the child for several days in his village until it had regained its strength sufficiently to trudge back to the station and look for its mother.

The story was repeated with so much persistence that I am inclined to think it was not altogether devoid of foundation. It used to be said in India before the mutinies, that when the Government found it inconvenient to provide for a member of the civil service in any other way, they invariably relegated him to a judgeship. If so, and the above story is true, then the ignorance of the fundamental principles underlying the law of evidence in murder cases, as displayed by the judge who tried this case, is scarcely a matter of wonderment.

CHAPTER XVI.

LUCKNOW.

The last week in February my regiment, together with several others, crossed the Ganges by the bridge of boats into Oudh, and, on March 4, encamped in the large park surrounding the Dilkoosha Palace, from the roof of which a good view of the doomed city, with its magnificent palaces, noble mosques, and gilded cupolas, embowered amidst groves and gardens of luxuriant growth, stretching for miles along the right bank of the river Goomtee, is obtained. The day after our arrival, being off duty, I walked up to the Dilkoosha, which was occupied by a few companies of Highlanders, and, passing through the apartments on the ground floor, where a vast collection of

broken miscellaneous furniture, from chandeliers and tapestries, to ottomans and bedsteads, were scattered about in dire confusion, I ascended to the flat-terraced roof above, and from this coign of vantage watched the fire of our batteries posted in the park cannonading the conspicuous building immediately in our front, named the "Martiniere College," to which the *pandies* (a term in common use to denote mutineer sepoys) vigorously responded. From the windows of the Martiniere itself, which is a handsome building several stories high, as well as from the trenches thrown up in its front, frequent puffs of white smoke showed that the place was occupied in force, and that the rebels were prepared to offer a desperate resistance at this point. As I and several other officers stood watching the combat, an occasional round shot would *ricochet* over the grassy plain, and either strike the walls of the Dilkoosha, or plump into the battery immediately on our left front. Meanwhile a surprise was in store for the rebels which disconcerted all their plans; for, during the early hours of

the morning of March 6, and before it was light, the whole of Sir James Outram's Division, to which the 2nd Punjaubees had been attached the day of our arrival before Lucknow, crossed the Goomtee by a temporary bridge of casks, which had been thrown over it about a mile above the Martiniere, and formed up, six thousand strong, on the left bank. It was a charming, bright, still morning, and I well remember the splendid sight presented by the British troops, as cavalry, horse artillery, and infantry all stood massed together on that vast, undulating plain, awaiting the signal to advance. The variegated colours of the different regimental uniforms, from the bright scarlet of the Queen's Bays, recently arrived from England, down to the dark green of the Rifles, and the deep blue of the Bengal Fusiliers, interspersed here and there with the sombre drab of the native troops, imparted quite a gay and animated appearance to the scene, such as will never be witnessed again in times of Indian warfare, now the serviceable *khaki* has been decreed the regulation dress for troops on active service.

It was truly an inspiriting spectacle, and, to an ordinary spectator, unaware of the circumstances, it might easily have been imagined that the troops were assembled for the purpose of taking part in some grand review. At length the whole division moved forward, and, with the cavalry scouting well in front, advanced about four miles in a northerly direction, until we struck the Fyzabad road, where, after a cavalry affair *en route*, in which the Queen's Bays unfortunately got entangled in some ravines and lost several men killed and wounded, including their major, Percy Smith, whose decapitated body was not recovered until next day, the force encamped near the village of Chinhut, on the exact site of Sir Henry Lawrence's disastrous reverse just previous to the investment of the Residency. The next morning, the 7th, the rebels came out unexpectedly, and attacked us in force. The first intimation I had of the attack was the sound of a round shot flying over the mess tent, where I was sitting after breakfast quietly smoking a cigar, and, on going outside, I saw another pass

clean through one of the tents of the Rifle Brigade, whose camp was pitched next to us. For a few minutes all was confusion; but the regiment quickly turned out, and, as soon as about a hundred men had been collected, I was directed by the adjutant to take them to the front; but I had scarcely cleared the camp when a staff-officer galloped up, and, finding I had no particular instructions, told me to go back and rejoin the regiment, as no more troops were required in front. It seems the enemy, taking advantage of the raviny nature of the ground, had brought up their artillery and opened fire on the camp before they were seen by our picquets, which, apparently, had not been posted sufficiently far in advance, and had, consequently, created a surprise; but they were soon forced to retire, and, as they were not followed up, everything was quiet again an hour afterwards. In the afternoon orders were received directing our regiment to occupy a village about a mile away on the left flank of the encampment, and the same night, just as I had made myself comfortable, and was

dropping off to sleep, another order came for four companies to proceed at once to the floating-bridge, by which the troops had crossed over to this side of the Goomtee on the previous day, for the purpose of bringing some siege guns back to the divisional camp. I felt inclined to grumble a bit when I was informed that I was one of the officers detailed for this duty, as the prospect of marching to and fro across a sandy plain the livelong night, escorting heavy guns which, from previous experience of this sort of work, I knew had an inveterate habit of sticking fast on cross-country roads every hundred yards or so, was anything but agreeable. However, there was no getting out of it; so off we trudged, and the result was that we only rejoined the regiment, after one of the most harassing night's work I ever remember, at eight o'clock the next morning.

From the village we were occupying, the movements of the *pandies* on the opposite or city-side of the river, could be clearly distinguished, and I watched them for several hours

to-day swarming like bees behind their intrenchments, which consisted of a double line of formidable earthworks studded with redoubts, the outer one being constructed along the line of an old canal, and entirely covered the south-eastern approach to the city, by which Sir Colin intended to deliver his main attack. These works, which might not inaptly be compared to a huge railway embankment, would undoubtedly have proved an exceedingly hard nut for our troops to crack had not the Commander-in-Chief adopted the wise precaution of throwing Sir James Outram's strong division in the first instance across the Goomtee, with a view to taking them in reverse and making their further occupation impossible by the enemy.

The following day we continued to maintain our position, and beyond some slight skirmishing, nothing eventful occurred; but on the 9th March the entire force advanced, and after capturing all the enemy's positions on the left bank of the Goomtee, as far as the Badshah Bagh, our batteries of heavy guns and mortars were placed in suitable positions along the

banks of the river, thus completing the turning movement designed by Sir Colin, and thereby rendering the formidable defences which the rebels had so carefully erected on the opposite side, absolutely innocuous. Communications at the same time were opened with Adrian Hope's Brigade acting on the right bank, by an act of intrepidity on the part of Lieutenant T. Butler, of the 1st Bengal Fusiliers, who in the most plucky manner swam across the Goomtee from a point near the racecourse, and by so doing earned the Victoria Cross.

As soon as the Commander-in-Chief received intimation that Sir James Outram's force was firmly established on the left bank of the Goomtee, a forward movement was at once commenced on his side of the river, with the result that the Martiniere and the whole of the enemy's first line of intrenchments, as far as Bank's bungalow, were occupied with but little loss, and preparations made for the erection of batteries along the canal for the immediate bombardment of the Kaiser Bagh, the Begum's Palace, and other works constituting the rebels'

second line of defence. Throughout the next two days, viz. the 9th and 10th March, my regiment was in occupation of the Badshah Bagh or King's Garden, an extensive enclosure surrounded with massive walls, the interior of which contained a number of small summer palaces with prettily laid out walks radiating in every direction, shaded by splendid orange-trees and decorated with fountains and beds of flowers. During these two days the regiment was exposed to a heavy fire from the enemy's batteries across the river, and several casualties occurred, one officer (Lieutenant Anderson) being shot dead, and about twenty men killed and wounded. The round shot came bounding through the garden at frequent intervals, thus rendering our stay there anything but pleasant. On one occasion, I remember, we were eating our tiffin outside a small building in the middle of the Bagh, when a shot from a twenty-four-pounder struck the wall within a few yards of where we were sitting, causing us to beat a hasty retreat to a less exposed situation.

On the 11th March we advanced from the Badshah Bagh, and, carrying all the enemy's positions as far as the iron bridge situated just below the Residency, established our batteries in close proximity to a large mosque, from which a hot fire was then directed in flank and rear of the rebels' works in the neighbourhood of the Kaiser Bagh and Chutter Munzil, whilst Sir Colin Campbell made arrangements for assaulting them in front. Unfortunately the stone bridge, about nine hundred yards lower down the river, which had also been taken by us the same day, was abandoned by our troops in pursuance of orders which have never to my knowledge been satisfactorily explained, and we had the intense mortification of seeing, from our position at the iron bridge, several thousands of mutineers quietly defiling over it throughout the course of the next three or four days, thus making good their escape towards Fyzabad and the heart of Oudh with scarcely any molestation on our part. A few shells, it is true, were occasionally fired at them from a couple of field guns posted at the iron bridge; but these mostly burst over their

heads without inflicting any damage. I think I am not wrong in saying that it was generally considered that the wholesale escape of the rebels on this occasion, when they might have been so easily circumvented and destroyed, had Sir Colin Campbell so willed it, was the one blot on his otherwise masterly tactics by which the capture of the fortified city of Lucknow, defended by upwards of 100,000 men, of whom it is computed nearly 30,000 were trained sepoys besides 7000 cavalry, was effected. Indeed competent critics have averred that had it not been for this error, the campaign against the rebels would practically have terminated there and then; and further operations of an extended nature, such as were conducted in Oudh and Western Behar for more than twelve months afterwards, would have been avoided.

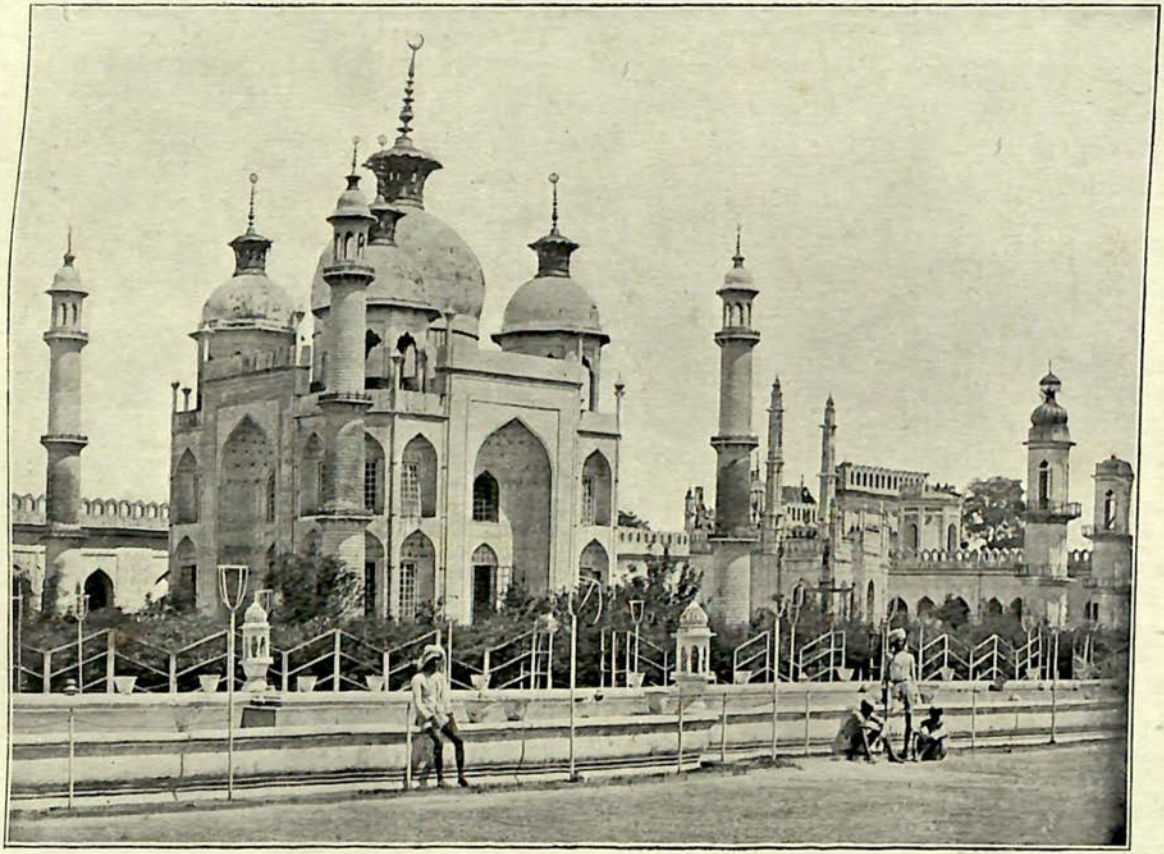
On the 12th March, Lieutenant Powlett, attached to my regiment, was severely wounded whilst on picquet duty on the banks of the river. Our sentries were always posted well in advance, and during the night a double sentry was placed

on the bridge itself, where a breastwork had been thrown up. On the night of the 12th, I was visiting these sentries, when sounds of digging were heard at the other end of the bridge, which I immediately reported to the Artillery Officer in charge of the battery a little distance in rear. He at once loaded with grape, and our men for the moment being withdrawn from the bridge, fired in the direction from which the sounds proceeded. Immediately there was a loud yell, and the brutes bolted; so the shot evidently went right into the midst of them. We followed this up with another round; but they had already decamped, and nothing further was heard of their working parties for the rest of the night. It was a fine sight watching the shells from our mortars bursting over the Kaiser Bagh, and searching out the enemy's second line of intrenchments. Sometimes no less than half a dozen of these twinkling messengers of death and destruction could be seen cleaving the air at the same moment, as they flew in graceful curves towards the city. Perhaps it may not be uninteresting to state in this place, as an

illustration of General Outram's genial disposition, that one day, whilst on duty with a company of my regiment in one of the batteries near the iron bridge, we were visited by the General, who, after chatting with us in a friendly way for a few minutes, pulled out his cigar-case, and, lighting one himself, distributed the rest amongst the officers present. No commander, I believe, was ever more beloved by those who were fortunate enough to serve under him, than was this illustrious Bayard, *sans peur et sans reproche.*

The detention of General Outram's Division on the left bank of the Goomtee, from the 11th to the 16th of March, was extremely galling to both officers and men, who were longing to cross the iron bridge and take the rebels in flank. That this manœuvre was not carried out was not in any measure due to supineness on the part of Sir James Outram; indeed Colonel Malleson, in his extremely interesting history of the Indian Mutiny, has stated that the General applied to the Commander-in-Chief for permission to do so, but was informed in reply by the chief of the

staff, Sir William Mansfield, that "he was not to do so if he thought he would lose a single man!" In face of such a command, General Outram naturally did not consider himself justified in forcing the passage of the bridge, as undoubtedly his loss must have been severe. On the morning of the 16th we observed some men of H.M.'s 20th Regiment, advancing along the right bank of the river by the road running from the Chutter Munzil towards the Residency, taking the iron bridge in reverse; and shortly after we received orders to cross over and join them, when, led by General Outram in person, we pushed on through the Machi Bhawun Fort to the great Imambarah Mosque, which was taken after a feeble resistance. After this our troops encountered but little opposition, and the following morning the Huseinee Mosque and Dowlut Khana were occupied, and later in the day another block of buildings still further on, known as the house of Shareef-ood-Dowla. All these places had been evacuated by the rebels, and we experienced no loss, with the exception of that caused by an accidental explosion of



THE HUSEINABAD MOSQUE AT LUCKNOW.

gunpowder, which unfortunately resulted in the deaths of two officers of the engineers and about thirty men.

Although the rebels had now been driven out of Lucknow, a large building with extensive gardens attached, called the "Moosa Bagh," some four miles from the city, was still held by them in force. To dislodge them from this position, Sir James Outram was despatched on the morning of the 19th March with a strong body of infantry and guns, the 2nd Punjab Infantry being one of the regiments composing the column. Another brigade of infantry, with the chief bulk of our cavalry, had meanwhile been ordered, under Brigadier Campbell, to intercept the retreat of the rebels after Outram had driven them from their position at the "Moosa Bagh," by a frontal attack. It is matter of history how sadly Campbell failed to carry out his mission, with the result that the entire rebel force, after being ousted from the "Moosa Bagh," escaped with but trifling loss, although a number of their guns were eventually captured by a squadron of

the 9th Lancers under Captain Cole, whom General Outram, observing the state of matters, had launched in pursuit at an opportune moment. With this affair, the operations against Lucknow were brought to a conclusion.

CHAPTER XVII.

BAREILLY.

On the 22nd March, the 2nd Punjaub Infantry was ordered to proceed with a large force of cavalry and artillery, and four regiments of infantry, the whole under the command of General Sir Hope Grant, towards Koorsie, a town situated on the Fyzabad road, about twenty-five miles from Lucknow, where it was reported between four and five thousand of the enemy were in position. On our arrival at Koorsie the rebels beat a hasty retreat; but they were pursued by the Punjab Cavalry and Horse Artillery, and a very dashing charge by the former, under Captain S. Browne (now Sir Sam Browne, V.C., K.C.B.), deserves to be recorded. Seeing the rebels moving off with

their guns, he with two squadrons of his own regiment, and a detachment of Watson's Horse under Captain Cosserat, charged several times right into the midst of them, killing two hundred and capturing fourteen guns. In this charge Lieutenant Macdonnell was shot dead and Captain Cosserat mortally wounded. The force then returned to Lucknow, but three weeks subsequently my regiment again took the field and marched with Walpole's Division towards Shajehanpore and Bareilly, in the district of Rohilcund. We were joined *en route* by Sir Colin Campbell, and on the 5th May, 1858, Bareilly was captured after a smart action, in the course of which a number of Ghazis (religious fanatics) charged down on the 42nd Highlanders sword in hand, but were bayoneted to a man. In this encounter Colonel Cameron, of the 42nd, had a very narrow shave of his life, as he was surrounded by Ghazees, who dragged him off his horse, and he was only saved from being cut to pieces by the plucky behaviour of two of his own men. General Walpole was also wounded in the hand by a

sword-cut from one of these fanatics, some of whom had actually penetrated to the rear of the Highlanders. On this occasion the 2nd Punjaub Infantry was detailed to form part of the second line, and as we were engaged in protecting the long line of baggage and siege train from the enemy's cavalry, which hovered on our flanks, I did not see much of the actual fight in front.

But as it turned out the day was not entirely devoid of excitement for us, as about one o'clock p.m., a great commotion was observed some distance off on our left front, and emerging from a cloud of dust I saw some hundreds of camp-followers, women as well as men, elephants, camels, and ponies, all mixed up together in a confused mass, streaming back from the plain towards the main road in the wildest terror. From our position, it was impossible to make out what was going on in front, as, with the exception of this surging multitude of men and animals, who now began retiring along the road in our direction, the dust effectually hid everything from view. It

was soon made apparent, however, from the shouts resounding on every side, that the rebel horsemen, taking advantage of our extended line of march, had seized a favourable opportunity to pounce down upon a large body of our camp-followers and baggage animals, which, notwithstanding every precaution, had strayed away from the roadside in order to pluck the grain and vegetables with which the country abounded. It may not be generally known that Dr. Russell, the *Times* war correspondent, who was being carried along sick in a dhooly, was in the thick of this *mêlée*, and literally escaped with his life by the skin of his teeth. He has himself given such a vivid description of this incident, in his interesting book, entitled, "My Diary in India," that I am tempted to reproduce the account *verbatim* in this place.

"The constant halts of the column were most irritating and annoying. Every moment the heat became more fearful, and there was no friendly shade to afford the smallest shelter from the blazing sun. More than one European soldier was carried past me fainting or dead, so I told the bearers to lift me and

carry me off to a small tope of trees in the field on my left, which seemed to be a quarter of a mile away, and to be certain to give us shade. But it turned out that the tope, which after all was only a very small cluster of bamboos and other trees, was much farther than I thought, and was by no means very umbrageous. Here my dhooly was placed close to Baird's, while the bearers went inside among the bamboos and squatted down to smoke or sleep. Around us just now there was no sign of the British troops in front. They had dipped down into ravines, or were at the other side of the high road. Here and there were clouds of dust, which marked the course of cavalry. Behind us were columns of the rear-guard and of the baggage. But the camp-followers were scattered all over the plains, and the scene looked peaceful as a hop-gathering. There is a sun, indeed, which tells us we are not in Kent. In great pain from angry leech-bites, and blisters, I had removed every particle of clothing, except my shirt, and lay panting in the dhooly. Suddenly there was a little explosion of musketry in our front. I leaned out of my dhooly, and saw a long line of Highlanders, who seemed as if they were practising independent file-firing on a parade-ground, looking in the distance very cool, and quiet, and firm; but what they were firing at I in vain endeavoured to ascertain. A few native troops seemed to be moving about in front of them. As suddenly as it had begun the firing died out. I looked once or twice towards the road to see if there were any symptoms of our advance. Then I

sank to sleep. I know not what my dreams were, but well I remember the waking.

"There was a confused clamour of shrieks and shouting in my ear. My dhooly was raised from the ground and then let fall violently. I heard my bearers shouting, "Sowar! sowar!" I saw them flying with terror in their faces. All the camp-followers, in wild confusion, were rushing for the road. It was a veritable *stampede* of men and animals. Elephants were trumpeting shrilly as they thundered over the fields, camels slung along at their utmost joggling stride, horses and tats, women and children, were all pouring in a stream, which converged and tossed in heaps of white as it neared the road—an awful panic! And, heavens above! within a few hundred yards of us, sweeping on like the wind, rushed a great billow of white sowars, their sabres flashing in the sun, the roar of their voices, the thunder of their horses, filling and shaking the air. As they came on, camp-followers fell with cleft skulls and bleeding wounds upon the field; the left wing of the wild cavalry was coming straight for the tope in which we lay. The eye takes in at a glance what tongue cannot tell or hand write in an hour. Here was, it appeared, an inglorious and miserable death swooping down on us in the heart of that yelling crowd. At that instant my faithful syce, with drops of sweat rolling down his black face, ran towards me, dragging my unwilling and plunging horse towards the litter, and shouting to me as if in the greatest affliction. I could scarcely move in the dhooly.

I don't know how I ever managed to do it, but by the help of poor Ramdeen I got into the saddle. It felt like a plate of red-hot iron; all the flesh of the blistered thigh rolled off in a quid on the flap; the leech-bites burst out afresh; the stirrup-irons seemed like blazing coals; death itself could not be more full of pain. I had nothing on but my shirt. Feet and legs naked—head uncovered—with Ramdeen holding on by one stirrup-leather, whilst, with wild cries, he urged on the horse, and struck him over the flanks with a long strip of thorn—I flew across the plain under that awful sun. I was in a ruck of animals soon, and gave up all chance of life as a troop of sowars dashed in among them. Ramdeen gave a loud cry, with a look of terror over his shoulder, and, leaving the stirrup-leather, disappeared. I followed the direction of his glance, and saw a black-bearded scoundrel, ahead of three sowars, who was coming right at me. I had neither sword nor pistol. Just at that moment a poor wretch of a camel-driver, leading his beast by the nose-string, rushed right across me, and seeing the sowar so close, darted under his camel's belly. Quick as thought the sowar reined his horse right round the other side of the camel, and as the man rose, I saw the flash of the tulwar falling on his head like a stroke of lightning. It cleft through both his hands, which he had crossed on his head, and with a feeble gurgle of 'Ram! Ram!' the camel-driver fell close beside me with his skull split to the nose. I felt my time was come. My naked heels could make no impression on the panting

horse. I saw, indeed, a cloud of dust and a body of men advancing from the road; but just at that moment a pain so keen shot through my head that my eyes flashed fire. My senses did not leave me; I knew quite well I was cut down, and put my hand up to my head, but there was no blood. For a moment a pleasant dream of home came across me; I thought I was in the hunting-field, that the heart of the pack was all around me; but I could not hold on my horse, my eyes swam, and I remember no more.

"On recovering my senses I found myself in a dhooly by the roadside, but I thought what had passed was a dream. I had been for a long time insensible. I tried to speak, but my mouth was full of blood. Then I was seized with violent spasms in the lungs, from which for more than an hour I coughed up quantities of mucus and blood; my head felt like a ball of molten lead. It is only from others I gathered what happened this day, for my own recollections of the occurrences after the charge of the cavalry are more vague than those of a sick man's night visions. It appears that I fell from my horse close to the spot where Tombs' guns were unlimbering, and that a soldier who belonged to the ammunition guard, and who was running from the sowars, seeing a body lying in the sun all naked, except a bloody shirt, sent out a dhooly when he got to the road for 'a dead officer who had been stript,' and I was taken up and carried off to the cover of some trees. Alison and Baird saved themselves also, but they got well away before I could mount."

CHAPTER XVIII.

CENTRAL INDIA.

THE result of the re-conquest of Bareilly was hardly as satisfactory as Sir Colin could have wished, as the main body of the rebels after their defeat got clear away under their leader (a notorious scoundrel named Bukht Khan, formerly a Soubadar of Artillery) towards Phillibeet, and eventually dispersed themselves over Eastern Rohilcund and Oudh.

The tremendous heat of the past week culminated at Bareilly on the evening of May 8, in a violent tempest accompanied by a deluge of rain mingled with hailstones approaching in size the proverbial pigeon's egg, which, after raging for an hour with unabated fury, completely swamped the station, and hurled a large number

of tents to the earth. It was a terrible experience as long as it lasted, and the discomfort of that night, with the water running like a sluice in and out and all round one's tent, in spite of the usual precautions which had been taken to keep the interior dry by digging a trench outside, will not be easily forgotten. The vast plain on which the force was encamped was found next morning to be more or less under water, and several regiments were obliged to shift their camp to dryer ground. The fall in the temperature caused by the storm, after the abnormal heat of the last few days, was something remarkable, and was very refreshing to the troops.

From Bareilly the 2nd Punjaub Infantry marched to Moradabad, and here, my health temporarily breaking down, I was sent on sick-leave to the hill station of Nynee Tal, which I reached after a fatiguing ride in company of Mr. and Mrs. Cracroft Wilson, who gave me a lift in their carriage half-way to the foot of the hills, on June 1, 1859. I believe we were the first Europeans that had visited the place since the outbreak.

In August, 1858, I was appointed by Sir Colin Campbell to be adjutant of the 1st regiment Mahratta Horse, then about to be raised for service in the territories of His Highness the Maharajah Scindia of Gwalior; and having regained my health, I joined at Morar in the following October, and assisted Major Phillips, the commandant, in raising the regiment, both at that station as well as at Indore, where it was subsequently ordered for recruiting purposes.

Whilst at Indore an offer was received from a wealthy Arab merchant at Baroda, the capital of the Guicowar's dominions in Guzerat, expressing his readiness to raise two troops of Mahrattas for the regiment, mounted on Arab horses, on condition that he was appointed *risaldar* (native captain) of the squadron, and his nephew a *jemadar* (lieutenant). As Major Phillips was anxious to recruit the regiment up to full strength as soon as practicable, and the prospect of obtaining one hundred and fifty Arabs was a tempting one, Captain Cory, our second in command, was despatched to Baroda to report on the aptitude of these men for military

service, and three months later he rejoined us at the pretty little station of Augur (formerly one of the cantonments garrisoned by the old Gwalior contingent), bringing with him eighty selected men mounted on active little Gulf Arabs; but we very soon found they were not exactly the stamp of men for irregular cavalry soldiers, and by degrees they all left us.

The district round Augur was at this period harassed by isolated bands of rebels and outlaws —the remnants of Tantia Topee's force, one of the most energetic and enterprising of the rebel leaders, who had recently been captured and hung at Sipri—so we made it our business, in combination with a couple of companies of the 72nd Highlanders, also stationed at Augur, to move out and intercept them whenever they happened to come within striking distance of the station; but as a general rule these expeditions were not very successful, as the rebels always managed to obtain notice of our approach, and flee into inaccessible jungle before we came up with them. Once, however, a detachment of the regiment succeeded in surprising a noted

outlaw named Heera Sing, a man of immense stature and great physical strength, who, on finding himself surrounded, bolted into a ravine, where, refusing to surrender, he stood at bay for a considerable time, and fought with the utmost desperation single-handed, before he was overpowered and slain.

In the month of February, 1860, to my great gratification, I was promoted to be second in command of my regiment, vice Captain Cory, who was transferred, at his own request, to his old corps, the 3rd Irregulars; and as no other officer was sent to take my place as adjutant, I continued to perform both duties. After a twelvemonth at Augur, the 1st Mahratta Horse was ordered to Sipri, in the Gwalior district; but we had only been there a few months when I was despatched in command of the left wing to a place called Mehidpore, in the province of Malwah, about two hundred and thirty miles from Sipri. It was the height of the rainy season, when I started on my long march, and only those who have had some experience of the rains in Central India,

and know what an effect the incessant downpour has on the sticky and treacherous black soil of Malwah, can understand the exceedingly moist and unpleasant time I had of it. On the march down I regret to say one of our native officers was brutally murdered in broad daylight by a sowar, whilst quietly asleep in his tent. With one stroke of his *tulwar* (native sword) he almost severed the unfortunate man's head from his body. The murderer was easily secured, as he made no attempt to escape; in fact, he openly boasted that he committed the deed from motives of jealousy and revenge. He was subsequently tried by a general court-martial at Morar, and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment; so it is evident the court must have considered that there were extenuating circumstances in the case, or such a lenient sentence would scarcely have been awarded. In other respects the march to Mehidpore was uneventful.

On arrival I found a detachment of troops from the Bombay Presidency encamped amidst the ruins of the old cantonment. These consisted of a very fine troop of Irregular Horse

under the command of Captain H. Moore, afterwards Persian interpreter to more than one Commander-in-Chief, and two companies of a native infantry regiment under Lieutenant Gatacre. As this portion of Central India had not settled down since the Mutiny, and dacoity was more or less rife throughout Malwah, we were chiefly employed during the cold weather of 1860–61 in traversing the district in every direction under the orders of Colonel Sir Richmond Shakespear, the agent for the Governor-General in Central India, with a view to its pacification. During the course of our perambulations I visited Mundesore, Neemuch, Oojein, and other places. Now and again we made a dash after dacoits; but, needless to say, owing to the jungly and rugged nature of the country they invariably gave us the slip. I was fortunate enough, however, on one occasion, whilst marching with a squadron on a cross-country road, to come across some of these gentry in the act of plundering a marriage party whilst on its way to the town of Oojein, and as they immediately made tracks on seeing us, we

promptly gave chase and managed to overtake and cut down a few of them just as they were on the point of effecting their escape into some dense jungle close at hand. The gratitude of the unfortunate people whom we had thus unexpectedly saved from being robbed and maltreated was unbounded, although the matter was afterwards made the subject of an official inquiry and I was called upon to state my reasons for not having captured the dacoits alive. On my giving a full explanation, however, and showing how impossible it was under the circumstances, to make prisoners, I was absolved from all blame.

In the spring of 1861, I rejoined regimental head-quarters at Sipri; but very shortly after I was again ordered off in command of a wing to Ooraie, in the province of Bundelcund.

The country I passed through swarmed with antelope and ravine deer, so I managed to do a good deal of shooting in the course of the march. One day a rather curious incident occurred. I had fired at and badly wounded a black buck, which just managed to crawl into a

ravine a short distance off. On coming up to the spot I was astonished to find a leopard in the act of gnawing the animal's thigh, a portion of which he had already devoured. This incident, so far as my experience of Indian shikar goes, is positively unique.

Speaking of black buck recalls to mind a remarkable instance of sagacity, combined with pluck of a very unusual character, on the part of one of these animals which once came under my personal observation, and is well worth recording.

In the year 1877, the 15th Bengal Cavalry, with which regiment I was then serving, was stationed at Cawnpore, and a native officer of my squadron owned a young male antelope which he had captured when it was only a few weeks old in the course of one of his shooting expeditions into the district, and had successfully reared in the lines. In January, 1878, I was ordered with my squadron to Jhansi, and this animal, which had become quite tame, and was a great favourite with all the men, marched with us. On the eighth day we reached Jhansi,

a distance of about eighty miles from Cawnpore, having crossed the river Jumna by the bridge of boats at Calpee. The morning after our arrival the squadron attended a brigade parade of the troops in garrison, and on our return to the lines we were greatly disconcerted to find the animal had disappeared, and the only conclusion we could come to was that he had either been stolen in our absence or had strayed away. What, then, was our astonishment to hear after a few days interval that the creature had actually turned up in the regimental lines at Cawnpore! How the animal could have found his way back all that long distance without being killed or captured seemed beyond our comprehension, more especially as after passing through the town of Calpee, the bridge of boats on the other side must necessarily be traversed in order to reach Cawnpore, an undertaking one would have thought impossible for an animal of this description. I was so interested in the safe accomplishment of this daring feat by our little pet that I caused inquiries to be made at the different villages *en route*,

and elicited the fact that a young deer had been seen galloping across the bridge of boats at Calpee at full speed early one morning, pursued by a lot of dogs, which, however, he must have quickly out-distanced on reaching the open country on the opposite side. I may mention that I had fully intended to have sent the above particulars for publication in the *Field*, but the Afghan War breaking out shortly after, I had other matters to think about and omitted to do so.

I regret to relate that the poor animal's end was a sad one. In due course an opportunity was found of sending him back to us at Jhansi; but one fine day he was again missed, and after some search his head, horns, and intestines were found in a pit close by, and it is believed some scoundrel must have stolen the poor beast and deliberately slaughtered him for the sake of feasting on his flesh. Poor little "Piara!" I was much distressed over his untimely fate; but although I offered a reward, we never succeeded in discovering the perpetrator of this cruel act.

A few weeks after my arrival at Ooraie, the long-expected orders for the re-organization and reduction of the native army were promulgated, and the 1st Mahratta Horse, after an existence of two years and eight months, together with thirteen other cavalry regiments, was finally broken up on the 31st of May, 1861.

As my subsequent military career which extended up to the 1st April, 1890—a period of nearly thirty-six years since I first landed in the country as a Cadet in the Honourable East India Company's Service—although not devoid of campaigning or free from adventures by flood and field, will scarcely be of interest to the general reader, I bring this narrative of my personal experiences of the great Sepoy Rebellion of 1857 to a close.

THE OUTBREAK AT MEERUT

BY

COLONEL A. R. D. MACKENZIE, C.B.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE OUTBREAK AT MEERUT.

ENGLISHMEN can never cease to be interested in the story of the great Sepoy Mutiny; and I trust that even so modest a contribution as mine to the narrative of some of its details may not be considered superfluous. Often have I been urged to give the semi-permanence of printer's ink to some story told over the walnuts and the wine; and at last I am tempted to take advantage of the enforced leisure which has been imposed on me by the recent regulations limiting tenure of regimental command, and placing me, with many other better men, unwillingly *en retraite*, while still in the prime of life and energy.

When at length the threatened storm burst, my regiment, the late 3rd Bengal Light Cavalry, was one of those which broke into revolt at Meerut. In its ranks were ninety men armed with muzzle-loading carbines; and it was these carabineers who first set authority at defiance by refusing to use the cartridges supplied to them, on the ground that they suspected the grease used in lubricating them to have been composed of hog's lard. This pretext was, on the face of it, absurd; since, as a matter of fact, the cartridges had been made regimentally; and all the men perfectly well knew that so innocent a compound as bees' wax and clarified butter had been applied as a lubricant. The word had, however, been passed throughout the Bengal native army to make the cartridge question the test as to which was stronger—the native soldier or the Government. Every one remembers the mysterious *chuppatties*, or flat wheaten cakes, which, shortly before the

Mutiny, were circulated from regiment to regiment. The message conveyed by them has never been fathomed by Englishmen; but there can be no doubt that they were in some way a signal, understood by the sepoys, of warning to be in readiness for coming events.

Colonel Carmichael Smith, commanding the 3rd Light Cavalry, with a view to test the willingness or otherwise of the carabineers of his regiment to use the cartridges, held a special parade for the purpose on April 24, 1857; and, after an explanatory speech, pointing out to the men the groundlessness of their fears, ordered them to use the cartridges. Eighty-five of them refused to do so. A court of inquiry was subsequently held on their conduct, followed by the inevitable court-martial. Only one finding was possible; and the sentence pronounced on all the culprits was one of ten years' imprisonment. This, in the case of some of the younger soldiers, was

reduced to five years by the confirming officer, General Hewitt, commanding the Meerut Division. On the morning of the 9th of May, the whole garrison of Meerut paraded to hear the sentence read out; after which each convict was fitted with a pair of leg-irons, fitted there and then, on to his ankles by blacksmiths.

In sullen silence the two native infantry corps, the 11th and 20th, and my own regiment, which was dismounted on that occasion, witnessed the degrading punishment. It would have been madness for them then to have attempted a rescue; for they would have been swept off the face of the earth by the guns of the artillery and the rifles of Her Majesty's 60th Foot, not to speak of the swords of the 6th Dragoon Guards (the Carabineers), all of whom were provided with service ammunition, and were so placed as to have the native regiments at their mercy.

For more than an hour the troops stood motionless, their nerves at the highest tension, while the felon shackles were being methodically and of necessity slowly hammered on the ankles of the wretched criminals, each in turn loudly calling on his comrades for help, and abusing, in fierce language, now their colonel, now the officers who composed the court-martial, now the Government. No response came from the ranks. The impressive ceremony was duly finished. The prisoners were taken charge of by the authorities of the jail and a guard of native infantry; and the troops marched back to quarters. For a few hours all was quiet. The snake of insubordination was, to all appearance, scotched, if not killed. Every one hoped that the stern lesson had been effectual; but a rough disillusion was in store for us.

On the evening of the next day, the memorable Sunday, May 10, 1857, at the hour when better folk were on their way to church,

I was quietly reading a book in my own bungalow when my bearer Sheodeen suddenly rushed into the room, exclaiming that a *hulla-goolla* (in our vernacular, a riot) was going on in the lines, that the sepoys had risen, and were murdering the Sahib logue. Not for an instant did I believe the latter part of his story, even though the rapid and frequent reports of fire-arms, which now broke the quiet of the Sabbath evening, made only too clear the truth of the first. The thought that flashed through my mind was that our men of the cavalry were attacking the native infantry in revenge for the sneers with which we all knew these others had freely, since the punishment parade, lashed their submissive apathy in witnessing, without an attempt at rescue, the degradation of their comrades. Sooth to say—so strong is the tie of camaraderie—my sympathies were all in the wrong direction; and I would secretly have rejoiced to have seen the insult avenged. Hurriedly putting on my uniform and sword, I

jumped on a horse, and galloped towards the regimental lines; but I had scarcely got out of the gate of my compound when I met the English quartermaster-sergeant of my regiment flying for his life on foot from his house in the lines.

"Oh God, sir!" he exclaimed, "the troopers are coming to cut us up!" "Let us then stick together," I answered; "two are better than one." For a moment he hesitated. Then, looking back, the sight of a small cloud of dust rapidly approaching from the distance overcame his resolution, and he rushed through the gate into the grounds of my bungalow, and scaled the wall between them and those of the next house. Instantly a small mob of *budmashes* (rascals), prominent among whom I recognized my own night watchman, attacked him. The chowkidar thrust at him with his spear as he was crossing the wall, and cut open his lips. To my joy he fired one barrel of a gun which he carried with him, and shot the brute

dead. He then dropped on to the ground on the other side, and disappeared from view. Later on will be found his subsequent adventures; for I rejoice to say he escaped with his life.

At this moment an infantry sepoy, armed with a sword, made a sudden swoop with it at my head. I had not drawn my sword, and had only time to dig a spur into my horse's flank, and force him almost on to my enemy. This spoilt his stroke, and his *tulwar* fortunately missed its aim, and only cut off my right shoulder cord. By this time I had pulled my weapon out of its scabbard, but the sepoy declined any further swordplay, and promptly climbed over a wall out of my reach. As I turned from him and looked down the road to the lines, I saw that it was full of cavalry troopers galloping towards me. Even then it did not occur to me that they could have any hostile intent towards myself, so I shouted to them to halt. This they did, and surrounded me; and, before

I knew what was happening, I found myself warding off, as well as I could, a fierce onslaught from many blades. A few moments would have sealed my fate, when, providentially, the late Lieutenant Craigie emerged from his gate a little further down the road, and came straight to my help. This diversion saved me. The troopers scattered past us, and made off towards the European lines. It was only too clear now that a mutiny, and that of the most serious kind, was in full swing. Our duty was plain, though very hard to perform, for at this moment Lieutenant Craigie's wife and my sister were on their way together in his carriage to the church, situated in the European lines, and our first natural impulse was to gallop after them. But they had started some little time previously, and we hoped that they had already reached their destination, and were in safety among the British troops. Military discipline sometimes tries a soldier to the utmost; and now we felt that wife and sister must be left in the hands

of God, and that our place was among the mutineers on the parade-ground. Thither we went as fast as our horses could carry us, and found ourselves in a scene of the outmost uproar. Most of the men were already mounted, and were careering wildly about, shouting and brandishing their swords, firing carbines and pistols into the air, or forming themselves into excited groups. Others were hurriedly saddling their horses, and joining their comrades in hot haste.

Nearly every British officer of the regiment came to the ground, and used every effort of entreaty, and even menace, to restore order, but utterly without effect. To their credit be it said the men did not attack us, but warned us to be off, shouting that the Company's Raj was over for ever! Some even seemed to hesitate about joining the noisiest mutineers; and Craigie, observing this, was led to hope that they might be won over to our side. He was an excellent linguist, and had great influence among them,

and he eventually managed to get some forty or fifty troopers to listen to him and keep apart in a group. Suddenly a rumour reached us that the jail was being attacked and the prisoners released. Calling to the late Lieutenant Melville Clarke and myself to come with him, Craigie persuaded the group which he had assembled to follow him, and away we went towards the jail. The roads were full of excited natives, who actually roared approbation as we rode through them, for they evidently did not distinguish in the dusk the British officers, and took the whole party for a band of mutineers. We three officers led, and as we neared the jail our pace increased, till from a smart trot we broke into a gallop. Already the sepoys and the mob had begun their destructive work. Clouds of smoke on all sides marked where houses had been set on fire. The telegraph lines were cut, and a slack wire, which I did not see as it swung across the road, caught me full on the chest, and bowled me over into

the dust. Over my prostrate body poured the whole column of our followers, and I well remember my feelings as I looked up at the shining hoofs. Fortunately I was not hurt, and regaining my horse I remounted, and soon nearly overtook Craigie and Clarke, when I was horror-struck to see a palanquin-gharry—a sort of box-shaped venetian-sided carriage—being dragged slowly onwards by its driverless horse, while beside it rode a trooper of the 3rd Cavalry, plunging his sword repeatedly through the open window into the body of its already dead occupant, an unfortunate European woman. But Nemesis was upon the murderer. In a moment Craigie had dealt him a swinging cut across the back of the neck, and Clarke had run him through the body. The wretch fell dead, the first sepoy victim at Meerut to the sword of the avenger of blood. All this passed in a second, and it was out of the power of our men to prevent it; but the fate of their comrade evidently greatly excited and angered them.

Shouts of "Maro! Maro!" ("Kill! Kill!") began to be heard among them, and we all thought the end was approaching. However, none of the men attacked us, and in a few minutes we reached the jail, only to find that we were too late. The prisoners were already swarming out of it; their shackles were being knocked off by blacksmiths before our eyes; and the jail guard of native infantry, on our riding up to it, answered our questions by firing at us, fortunately without hitting any of us. There was nothing to be done but ride back to the cantonment.

No sooner had we turned our horses' heads than the full horror of what was taking place burst upon us. The whole cantonments seemed one mass of flames. If before we rode fast, now we flew; for the most urgent fears for the safety of those dear to us tortured us almost to madness. As we tore along Craigie allowed me to leave him and go in search of his wife and my sister, and to take any of the men who

would go with me. I lifted my sword and shouted for volunteers to come to save my sister, and some dozen of them galloped after me. As hard as our horses could gallop we tore along. Every house we passed was in flames, my own included, and my heart sank within me. Craigie's house alone was not burning when we reached it—a large double-storeyed building, in very extensive grounds, surrounded, as was then usual, by a mud wall. Here I found Mrs. Craigie and my sister. They had never reached the church. Their coachman had turned back in terror of the mob. As they passed the bazar a soldier of the 6th Dragoon Guards rushed out of a bye-lane, pursued by a yelling crowd. The brave ladies, at the imminent risk of their own lives, stopped the carriage, took him in and drove off at full speed, followed for some distance by the blood-thirsty wretches, who, being on foot, were soon left behind, not, however, till they had slashed with their tulwars in several places the hood

of the carriage, in vain efforts to reach the inmates.

It is impossible to realize what terrors these ladies must have suffered till the moment of my arrival. Every minute they despaired of surviving to the next. All around them flames of burning houses and mobs of yelling demons! Not knowing whether the husband and brother were alive or dead—deserted apparently by God and man—hopeless of help, they yet never despaired, nor lost their courage or presence of mind. Their first thought had been to find Craigie's weapons, and place them where they would be ready to hand if he or I did ever come. Nothing had they overlooked. Three double-barrelled guns stood against the wall, with powder-flask and bullets and caps. They were not loaded, for the ladies did not know how to load them; and the unfortunate carabineer was in a state of nervous collapse. Over-joyed and thankful to providence as I was to find them still alive and unhurt, I could not conceal

from them that extreme danger was by no means over, and that they would yet have need of all their courage. The greater risk, I instinctively felt, was from the uncertain temper of my men; and I determined on a desperate stroke. I therefore brought the ladies down to the door of the house, and calling to me the troopers commended their lives to their charge. It is impossible to understand the swift torrents of feeling that flood the hearts of Orientals in periods of intense excitement. Like madmen they threw themselves off their horses and prostrated themselves before the ladies, seizing their feet, and placing them on their heads, as they vowed with tears and sobs to protect their lives with their own.

Greatly reassured by this burst of evidently genuine emotion, I now ordered the men to mount and patrol the grounds, while I took the ladies upstairs, and then loaded all the guns with ball. One of them I placed by itself against the wall. Long afterwards in quiet

England, my sister, who still survives, told me that both she and Mrs. Craigie well understood the sacred use to which that gun was, in the last resort, devoted, and that the knowledge comforted and strengthened them.

Through the windows flashed brilliant light from the flaming houses on all sides. The hiss and crackle of the burning timbers—the yells of the mob—the frequent sharp reports of fire-arms, all formed a confused roar of sound, the horror of which might well have overpowered the nerves of the ladies; but I learned during that awful night the quiet heroism of which our gentle countrywomen are capable in the hour of need. As I stepped out on to the upper verandah I was seen by some of the mob who were wrecking the opposite house. "There is a feringi!" they cried; "let us burn this big *kothi!*" (house). And several of them ran forward with lighted brands to the boundary wall; but on seeing my gun levelled at them they thought better of it and recoiled. More than

once this happened. It seemed only a matter of time before our house should be set on fire at one point or another. Fortunately I remembered the existence in the grounds of a small Hindu shrine, strongly built of masonry, on a high plinth, and with only one entrance, approached by a flight of stone or brick steps. If I could only get my charges and the guns and ammunition safely across the open space between us and that building, I felt sure of being able to hold out till help should come; for surely help would soon come! Were not the 6th Dragoon Guards, the 60th Rifles, and the Horse Artillery Batteries within a couple of miles?

At this juncture we were cheered by the arrival of Lieutenant Craigie, who, after I left him, had gone back to the parade ground where the uproar was still at its height, the heroic efforts of the British officers to bring the men to reason being quite futile. At length, seeing the hopelessness of further endeavour, and

finding the men getting more and more uncontrollable, they were compelled to retire and make for the European lines, carrying away with them the now for-ever disgraced standards of the regiment. One of them, the late Major Fairlie, also carried with him a bullet which was lodged in his saddle-tree.

Craigie then made his way back to us at great risk of his life, accompanied by a few men who had never left him. He warmly approved of my plan; and having explained it to the ladies, they quickly gathered together a few necessary articles of apparel, etc.; and each carrying her bundle, and concealed as far as possible under a covering of dark blanket, while Craigie and the carabineer and I carried the guns and ammunition, we seized a favourable moment and ran rapidly across to our new stronghold.

Once there, we were safe from being burnt out, and indeed from successful attack of any kind by the cowardly crew with which we had

to deal. The interior space was very small, probably about ten feet square. In front was the narrow doorway, and in the massive walls were slits like loopholes through which we could observe if any attempts were made to approach the place. Every now and then our troopers brought us news of what was going on. The night had not long closed in when they told us that apparently the whole body of mutineers, horse and foot, had marched away to Delhi. Their attack on the European lines, if they had made one, had clearly failed; and the only marauders remaining in Meerut were the butchers and other scum of the city and bazars. Presently one of our men went over to the opposite house, which by this time was burnt nearly to the ground. He returned with awful news. He had found the dead body of its occupant, a lady, whose husband at the outbreak was absent in the European quarter. She had been most cruelly and brutally murdered, her unborn infant sharing her pitiable fate. He

showed us, in confirmation of his story, a portion of her dress reeking with blood. Not far from us, another lady, while attempting to escape, disguised as an ayah, was recognized as a European, and murdered. Two veterinary-surgeons, attached to the regiment, had been killed—one of them with his wife—under circumstances of ghastly horror. They were both sick in bed with small-pox when the uproar of the mob startled them; and they came in their night clothes into the verandah, he carrying a gun loaded with shot, which he discharged at the crowd, only further enraging it. He was instantly shot dead. His wife met with a worse fate. The cowardly demons, afraid to touch her because of the danger of infection, threw lighted brands at her. Her dress caught fire; and she perished thus miserably. My own house-comrade, a fine young officer, had been mobbed on his way to church, and so hacked to pieces that but for his length—he was very tall—and the rags of his uniform which still

clung to him, his remains would have been unrecognizable when they were subsequently recovered. A poor little girl, daughter of one of the British non-commissioned officers of the regiment, had been slaughtered by a blow of a sword which cut her skull in two. Scenes like the above had been enacted all over Meerut; but I will spare the reader further details. If he is sickened by what I have already written, I can only say that mere generalities, however graphic, are insufficient to place before him a true picture of what English men, women and children suffered at the hands of the mutineers, not only in Meerut, but almost everywhere throughout the North-West Provinces of India.

Anxiously did we now listen for the rattle of horses' hoofs, the rumble of guns, or the tramp of feet coming to our help, but none came! Hour after hour passed, and still the mob were left undisturbed in their work of destruction and murder. We heard afterwards that a strong

mounted party had been sent to clear the cantonments and rescue any survivors of the massacre; but, incredible to relate, it had been misled by the staff-officer who was detailed to guide it, and never reached its intended destination. Among the troopers with us were one or two traitors, whose sole object in remaining was to undermine the loyalty of the rest. A young recruit who had, not long previously, passed through riding school in the same squad with myself, presently came to me as I was standing among a group of the men outside our stronghold (for Craigie and I now took it in turns to try and re-assure them by mixing with them), and warned me to beware of the havildar-major, who had, he said, at that moment, been urging the others to kill me. It may be well imagined that I took very good care afterwards to keep a watchful eye on that non-commissioned officer, and to let him see by a touch of my hand on the hilt of my sword that I was quite ready for any suspicious

movement on his part. Soon afterwards he and a few others rode out of the gate, and we saw them no more. They had not long gone when a servant of Craigie's, a Hindu bearer, came up to us in great excitement with the news that a crowd of *budmashes* was coming in at the gate. He implored us to give him one of the guns, and let him go and fire at them. Whether wisely or not, we did so; and almost immediately afterwards we heard a report, followed by yells and groans. In a few moments the bearer returned, and gave us back the gun, saying that he had fired into "the brown" of the advancing mob, and brought one of them down, and the rest had fled.

It was now about midnight. The uproar was quieting down; and we determined on making our escape, if possible. So, with our own hands, the syces (grooms) having bolted, we harnessed Craigie's horses to his carriage; placed the ladies and carbineer inside with the three guns; made a native boy who usually rode

postillion, and who fortunately had not gone off with the syces, mount one of the horses, and set off, Craigie and I riding with drawn swords beside the carriage. This was a critical moment. A knot of the troopers, evidently wavering in their intentions, occupied the avenue before us, loudly talking and gesticulating. The postillion hesitated; but, on our threatening to run him through the body if he did not at once gallop on, he took heart of grace, lashed his horses, and in a moment we had charged through and scattered the impeding group, and were racing along the avenue at full speed over the body of the man who had been killed by the faithful bearer, and who was afterwards identified as a Mussulman butcher, a class of men who were among the most blood-thirsty actors on that night. Turning out of the gate to our left we made along the road to the regimental parade ground, from which a nearly unbroken plain stretched to the European lines.

We found the plain deserted; and rapidly

made our way till we reached a short length of straight road which ran to the stables of the carabineers. At the far end of it, we saw a light, which we rightly took to be a portfire. Making the postillion slacken speed, Craigie and I galloped forward, shouting, "Friend! Friend!" at the utmost stretch of our lungs. And well was it we did so; for we found, at a point where a bridge crossed a nullah, a picquet with a gun trailed up the road; and the subaltern in command told us he was on the point of firing at our rapidly approaching group when our voices reached him. At last—with deep gratitude—we felt that our dear ones were once more safe among our own countrymen. The wife of a sergeant of the carabineers very kindly gave the ladies shelter for the rest of the night; and Craigie and I shifted for ourselves *al fresco*.

To revert to the adventures of the regimental quartermaster-sergeant after he left me. Covered with blood from the wound in his lip,

and carrying his gun in one hand and his sword in the other, he presented a sufficiently startling spectacle as he burst into a room of a neighbouring bungalow, occupied by two young officers, and warned them—still unconscious—of what was taking place. Not a moment did they lose in buckling on their swords and rushing to the stables. As they did so they saw one of their own syces running away with a saddle on his head. They could only find two other saddles; but fortunately bridles for three horses were hanging on their usual pegs. Rapidly slipping them on, they mounted, giving the sergeant a bare-backed animal, and then made for a gate. It was blocked by mutineers. They turned to the other; that also was blocked. Their lives seemed lost, when one of their servants, a sweeper, the lowest and most despised caste of Indian domestics, heedless of the certainty that his own life would be sacraficed to the fury of the mob disappointed of its prey, implored them to follow him. Running

before them he led them to the back of the out-houses, and showed them a gap in the "compound"* wall which the servants had made for their own convenience. Through this gap they filed, and galloped off, escaping the hurried shots which were fired after them, and eventually reaching in safety the barracks of the 60th Rifles. The sweeper fell a victim to the rage of the pursuers. He was hacked to pieces. No more beautiful deed ever brightened the dark days of the "'57" than the self-sacrifice of this obscure and nameless hero.

* * * * *

The European troops, 1500 strong, were paralysed by the irresolution of their chief. Had the gallant Hearsey or Sidney Cotton occupied Hewitt's place at Meerut, it is safe to say that, in spite of the wings which fear lent to the mutineers on their flight to Delhi, few

* The name given to the enclosed grounds of a house in the North-Western Provinces.

of them would have reached that haven of their hopes. The shrapnel of the artillery and the swords of the carabineers would have annihilated them. It is true that Generals Hewitt and Archdale Wilson, late in the evening, moved the troops over the open plain of the infantry parade-ground, and that they caused a few rounds to be fired, in the dark, at some belated stragglers of the cavalry, which said rounds, by the way, nearly killed an officer, Lieutenant Galloway, of my regiment, who had taken refuge in an out-house in the line of fire; but General Hewitt, instead of even then detaching the carabineers and a battery of horse artillery in pursuit of the flying mutineers, acted on the ill-starred advice of the Brigadier to withdraw the whole force to the European lines. No greater mistake from any point of view was ever committed.

Difficult as it is to understand, and impossible to excuse the motives which paralyzed the nerves of General Hewitt, it can only be

hoped that all our officers have laid to heart the lesson so frequently learned in the great school of the Sepoy Mutiny that, in dealing with an Oriental enemy, *l'audace! et toujours l'audace*, is not only the most soldier-like, but is also the surest road to success.

HOW THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH SAVED INDIA

BY

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CHAPTER XX.

HOW THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH SAVED INDIA.

In some interesting letters lately published in *The Standard* on the subject of disaffection in India, it has been represented that the telegraph and the sub-marine cable are the curse of modern India, so far as the administration of the country is concerned; the writers meaning to convey that the close control, which is now exercised from the head-quarters of the Government over executive officers, tends to cramp that promptness and freedom of action so necessary in dealing with sudden emergencies, either within or beyond our Indian borders. Inasmuch as it is contrary to human nature to accept responsibility when, by obtaining orders from superior authority, it is unnecessary to

do so, this is, no doubt, true to a very great extent. When the dogs of war are assembled, as they are at the present moment, for one of the numerous frontier expeditions so frequently forced upon the nation, they are never entirely let loose; the leash that holds them is the telegraph-wire, terminating in the controlling hands of the Viceroy or Secretary of State. Although this system of centralization has possible drawbacks, in that it may lead to indecision, hesitation, and delay—qualities very likely to be mistaken by uneducated people for weakness — on the other hand, it has the advantage of controlling and restraining impetuosity which might easily lead to rash and regrettable acts. Certainly it would be quite wrong to depreciate the undoubted value of the electric telegraph because of the assistance it may lend to over-centralization.

It is almost impossible to over-estimate the assistance which the telegraph renders, not only in the administration of the country, but in

the conduct of every military operation that is undertaken. The field-telegraph is now just as much a part of every mobilized force as the commissariat; no body of troops is ever moved without it. In India especially, where the distances are so great, and means of locomotion slow, does the telegraph-wire play an important part, and in no country has more attention been given to the internal telegraph-system, and to designing and perfecting a thoroughly practical field-telegraph. How successful these efforts have been is shown by the regularity and promptness with which authentic information of what has happened, it may be on the very fringe of the Empire, reaches England. So accustomed have the readers of our daily journals become to this that they think nothing of telegrams from some lonely outpost in the Swat Valley, or on the Samana Range, dated sometimes on the same day. They have ceased to wonder how it is done, and give no thought to the difficulties that have to be overcome, the

toil and exposure and danger undergone before such results can be obtained. The balance of usefulness is so greatly in favour of the telegraph, that it would be a thousand pities for an impression to get abroad that it is in any sense the curse of India. The reliance that is placed upon it is due to no sudden appreciation of its value, but to a gradual growth which year by year has increased until it may now be called absolute. To show how true this is I propose to relate the part that the electric telegraph played at the time of the great Mutiny, when it was in its infancy in India, and its practical value had not yet been fully recognized. It is a story which has been already told by Kaye and other writers, and told with much graphic and picturesque detail of circumstance, but not hitherto, I think, in England at least, with perfect accuracy. So recently as last February a short summary of it was, indeed, published in that excellent Indian paper, *The Pioneer*, on the retirement from the public service of the signaller

who actually despatched the "fateful telegram." But Englishmen, insatiable devourers as they are of their own journals, have not, as a rule, perhaps, much time to spare to those of other countries, and, so far as India is concerned, are mostly content to take their news from the English Press, whereby they are sometimes the losers.

Mr. William Brendish, the officer in question, who has just retired after forty years' service in the Indian Telegraph Department, is the sole survivor of the telegraph-staff present in Delhi at the time of the outbreak in 1857, and the story, as now told, is taken chiefly from his statements. As I have already said, various more or less correct, but exaggerated, accounts have been given to the world. In one it is related that the young signaller stood in the office with his hand upon the signalling apparatus until the mutineers were almost upon him, and he could hear their shouts growing nearer and clearer as they swept up the street. Still he

went on with his work, and flashed up to Umballa and the Punjaub this message: "The sepoys have come in from Meerut and are burning everything. Mr. Todd is dead, and we hear several Europeans. We must shut up." The writer goes on to say that the mutineers burst in on the devoted lad, the last click died away, and in the performance of his duty the signaller was slain. A touching and exciting story, but unfortunately (?) not quite true, as the signaller in question is still alive, and able to recollect what really did happen, which, stirring enough in all conscience, lacked the final tragedy of the popular version.

Many have no doubt heard of the fateful telegram which led Mr. Montgomery, the Judicial Commissioner of the Punjaub, in reporting on the events of that anxious time to write, "The electric telegraph has saved India;" but few can know the real facts of the case, and it may be as well to relate the story of what actually occurred on the authority of the man who

played a principal part in the immortal drama of the fall of Delhi.

The actual outbreak of the Mutiny in the Punjaub took place at Meerut, on Sunday, May 10, 1857. The custom then, as now, was to close all telegraph-offices, except at a very few important stations, on Sundays between the hours of nine in the morning and four in the afternoon. On that Sunday morning the signaller at Delhi, before closing his office, was informed by the assistant in charge of the Meerut office of the excitement that prevailed there owing to the sentence that had been passed on the men of the 3rd Cavalry for refusing to use the new cartridges. He was told that eighty men had been imprisoned and were to be blown away from guns. This, of course, was an exaggeration, but it was quite true that the eighty men had been degraded and sent in irons to the jail. The exaggerated gossip which passed over the telegraph-wire only emphasises the indifference engendered by confidence in the large force

of European soldiers stationed at Meerut, or by ignorance of the widespread feeling of discontent that prevailed in the native army, and makes it the more extraordinary that, notwithstanding the excitement and possible danger, the telegraph-offices both at Delhi and Meerut were closed as usual at nine o'clock. One would have thought that, considering the grave condition of affairs, the authorities at Meerut and Delhi would have desired to keep in touch with each other; but such was not the case, and the same spirit which actuated those who attended morning church at Meerut, or went for their afternoon drive as usual, led to the customary Sunday routine being carried out, and consequently to nothing being known that day in Delhi of the terrible events at Meerut. For when the Delhi office was opened in due course at four o'clock in the afternoon, communication with Meerut was found to be interrupted. As a matter of fact the telegraph-wire was cut by the mutineers near Meerut some time in the

afternoon, though of course this was not known at Delhi.

The telegraph-office at Delhi was situated outside the city walls, about one mile from the Cashmere Gate, and the same distance from the Flagstaff Tower. The staff consisted of Mr. C. Todd, assistant in charge, with a wife and child, and two young lads as signallers, Brendish and Pilkington; all Europeans, with the usual native subordinates. Pilkington, it should be said, had a withered leg and wore a special boot, but was active notwithstanding. The telegraph-line to Meerut, almost immediately after leaving Delhi, had to be carried over the Jumna, a large river crossed by means of a cable, with a cable-house on either bank where the overhead line was joined on to the cable through a lightning protector. One of the chief difficulties besetting telegraphy in India in those days was the number of large rivers that had to be crossed. Those that were too wide to span had to be cabled, and owing

to the ever-changing beds of the rivers, and to the deterioration in the insulating material with which the cables were constructed, they were a source of constant trouble. So much was this the case that whenever a circuit containing a cable broke down suspicion fell upon the cable, and the first thing to be done was to test it. Accordingly on that Sunday afternoon, when it was found on opening at four o'clock that the communication with Meerut was interrupted, Brendish and Pilkington were sent for that purpose by Mr. Todd, across the bridge of boats, to the other side of the Jumna. They found that they could signal through the cable back to the office at Delhi, but could not work with Meerut, which proved the line to be interrupted beyond in the direction of the latter place. It was too late to do anything further that evening; the two signallers therefore returned to Delhi, and Mr. Todd made arrangements to go out himself next morning to endeavour to restore communication.

Accordingly, about eight o'clock the following morning, that is, on Monday morning, the 11th of May, he started in a *gharry*, or carriage drawn by two ponies, and never returned. His fate is not accurately known, but it is believed that when crossing the bridge of boats he must have met the first detachment of the mutinous 3rd Cavalry on their way from Meerut, that he must have been pulled out of his *gharry* and murdered, and his body thrown into the Jumna. At all events he was never heard of again, and his wife looked anxiously and in vain for his return.

The 11th of May thus found the telegraph at Delhi in charge of two lads, encumbered with the wife and child of Mr. Todd, and surrounded by native servants who were doubtless only waiting to see how things went before taking the lives of every European in the office. At that time there was published in the city a newspaper called *The Delhi Gazette*, and in order to prevent delay in conveying telegrams

for the press to the publishing office, messengers belonging to the latter were posted at the telegraph-office, and from these men Brendish and Pilkington were able to obtain information from time to time of what was going on in the city about a mile away. The information thus picked up they telegraphed to Umballa, whence it was passed on to the Chief Commissioner at Lahore. This was done unofficially, be it understood, mere signaller's chatter; for all that Monday morning not a single telegram was sent by any official at Delhi, though the line to Umballa and northwards was in perfect working order. In this way information was given of the mutinous 3rd Cavalry having crossed the bridge of boats and entered the city. From the messengers of *The Delhi Gazette* the signallers learned that the regiment of native infantry, which, with two horse-artillery guns, they had seen go past the telegraph-office to oppose the mutineers, had, when ordered to fire, fired in the

air, and how their officers had been shot down by the troopers of the 3rd Cavalry. All this was communicated to Umballa and duly passed on to Lahore.

About noon young Brendish went out on to the main road leading past the office, where he met a wounded officer making his way from the city to the cantonment, who said to him, "For God's sake get inside and close your doors." Native shopkeepers from the city also passed as fugitives, and said that the sepoys were even murdering them, and that there would be no chance for white men. After this the lads naturally felt very insecure, isolated as they were, and wanted to get away to a place of safety. Mrs. Todd, however, was very unwilling to leave, uncertain as she was as to her husband's fate, and expecting him back at any moment. They succeeded at length in persuading her to leave, and about two o'clock the two lads with Mrs. Todd and her child made their way from the isolated

office to the Flagstaff Tower, distant about a mile, where the other refugees from the city and cantonment were congregating. Before leaving the office Brendish despatched a final report to Umballa ending with, "*and now I'm off*," meaning that they were leaving the office, which significant words usually appear as concluding what is called the fateful telegram.

Now the most curious thing in this story is that no civil or military officer came to the telegraph-office during the whole morning of Monday, the 11th, to despatch any telegram in his own name, nor was any telegram sent by messenger for transmission to Umballa. Mr. Brendish accounts for this by the supposition that the dominant idea in everybody's mind was that the British troops from Meerut would be over at any moment, and therefore no one thought it worth while to report the outbreak at Delhi to the authorities in the Punjaub. This may be so; but another reason no doubt was that the administration in those days was not

centralized to the extent that it is now, and that local officers did not think of asking for orders but acted on their own responsibility. Besides, the telegraph was then quite a new institution, and people had not got into the habit of using it, and placing reliance on it, in the way they do at the present day.

Mr. Brendish, however, remembers that shortly after arriving at the Flagstaff Tower, about three in the afternoon, a military officer gave Pilkington a telegram and sent him back to the telegraph-office with an escort of sepoys. He does not know whether Pilkington actually sent off the telegram, but believes he must have done so, as there was time, and he saw him again afterwards the same day on the way to Kurnaul, though he did not speak with him.

Kaye, in his "History of the Sepoy War," relates that young Barnard rode from Umballa to Simla on the 12th of May, with a letter from his father to General Anson, then Commander-in-Chief, informing him that a strange incoherent

message had been received from Delhi to the following effect: "We must leave office, all the bungalows are on fire, burning down by the sepoys of Meerut. They came in this morning. We are off. Mr. C. Todd is dead, I think. He went out this morning and has not yet returned. We learned that nine Europeans are killed." This is evidently the signaller's chatter aforesaid, and gave the Commander-in-Chief his first intimation of what had happened. Later in the day the following message was received: "Cantonment in a state of siege—mutineers from Meerut—3rd Light Cavalry—numbers not known, said to be one hundred and fifty men, cut off communication with Meerut; taken possession of the bridge of boats. 54th Native Infantry sent against them refused to act. Several officers killed and wounded. City in a state of considerable excitement. Troops sent down, but nothing known yet. Information will be forwarded."

Mr. Brendish is certain that the first of these

telegrams was signalled by himself. The second telegram, he says, was written neither by him nor by Pilkington, and he believes it to be the one which Pilkington received from a military officer at the Flagstaff Tower and went back to the telegraph-office to signal at about three in the afternoon. This appears likely from the wording of the telegram. Its carefully guarded language was evidently meant to avoid anything of an alarming character; while the reference to the state of excitement prevailing in the city shows that the authorities were even then ignorant of what had actually taken place, or else altogether under-rated the importance of the outbreak. This is only one more example of the absolute disbelief which existed among Europeans at that time in the possibility of a general mutiny of the troops, showing how little we knew then of the real feeling of the native army towards us. And yet we were in a better position to know in those days than we are now, for the personal relations between the governing and governed

were more intimate and cordial than at the present day. The recent murders at Poona, and the fact that a very large reward has failed to bring forward any one to denounce the murderers, shows how little sympathy is really existing between the races.

Mr. Brendish remained at the Flagstaff Tower, assisting the non-combatants, including ladies, to load muskets till sunset, when he set out with others with the intention of going to Meerut, where there was known to be a large force of Europeans. In the dark, however, the ford over the river was missed, and he with a party reached Kurnaul on the morning of the 12th. There he found Pilkington and Mrs. Todd, who had come in on a postmaster's carriage, and they all went on together to Umballa on the next day.

On reporting themselves at the telegraph-office they were met by the assistant in charge who exclaimed, "My God! I thought you had all been killed." It appears that late in the

afternoon of the 11th there were movements on the needle at Umballa as if some one at Delhi was trying to signal, but as no answer came to the usual question ("What is your name?"), they suspected that it was somebody unfamiliar with the apparatus, and that all the staff had been murdered. The telegraph-office at Delhi shared the fate of most other European houses and was burned, but it is not known how long after the despatch of the last message which Pilkington was sent back to signal.

As regards the value rendered by the telegraph on this occasion, let us hear what Sir Herbert Edwardes said at Liverpool, in March, 1860. "Just look at the courage and sense of duty which made that little boy, with shot and cannon all around him, manipulate that message which I do not hesitate to say was the means of the salvation of the Punjaub. When the message reached Lahore it enabled Mr. Montgomery and the General to disarm the native troops before they had received one word of

intelligence on the subject. The same message was flashed from Lahore to Peshawar, and we took our measures there in the same way, and before any of the mutineers or Hindustani regiments had the opportunity of laying their plans, we had taken all ours and were able to defeat them when the hour of difficulty arose."

From Umballa Mr. Brendish was transferred to the office at Loodiana. While there he heard of a volunteer cavalry corps being raised at Meerut, which was called the Meerut Light Horse. He resigned the Telegraph Department in November, 1857, and joined that corps. In 1858 he was transferred to the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry, with which he served in the Nepaul Terai, until its disbandment in July, 1859, when he was re-engaged in the Telegraph Department.

This is the true story of how two lads were able to render a great—it is difficult to appreciate *how* great—service to the State. One of them, Pilkington, died many years ago, after not too

successful a career. The other, Brendish, has lived to reap the reward of his devotion to duty. The Government of India has recognized his special services by granting him a pension on retirement equal to the full pay of his rank, and the Governor-General in Council has expressed his appreciation of his work and congratulated him on the special service he was able to render to his country on that ever-memorable 11th of May, 1857.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

(See page 38.)

When at last the signal was given for the retirement to Kurnaul, a fearful scene presented itself at the Tower. Carriages of every description were in waiting, but as I had gone up to the Flagstaff with Mrs. Paterson, and my husband had ridden, I was left without any conveyance. Everybody, with the exception of one or two ladies and gentlemen were by this time fairly off on their way either to Kurnaul or Meerut. One gentleman, seeing me standing by, offered me a seat in his carriage, and as I had my little boy with me, I placed him in with him, hoping to follow with Mrs. Wood. I must mention that Major Paterson's coachman had made off with his carriage and horses

immediately we had quitted it on our arrival at the Tower; so Mrs. Paterson was left, like myself and Mrs. Wood, to depend upon our friends. Fortunately two empty buggies were close by, so Mrs. Wood and I got into one and Mrs. Paterson and her children into the other.

After Mrs. Wood and I had proceeded a short distance, we met her husband, Dr. Wood, who was being carried on a bed, he having unfortunately been shot in the face by, it is supposed, a man of his own regiment (the 38th). The Doctor's carriage was following him, and fortunate for him that it was, as the bearers refused to carry him further than the native infantry lines. My husband, not knowing how he was to get on, inquired of the Brigade-Major (Captain Nicol) how it was to be managed; the answer he received was, "the best way you can." My husband then left us to go to the quarter-guard of his regiment, to see if he could prevail on his company to accompany us to Kurnaul, while we went on towards Kurnaul, the doctor being inside his close carriage, and Mrs. Wood and myself following him up in a buggy.

When we left the parade-ground it was about half-

past six p.m., and we were the last ladies to leave the station. We had only proceeded a short distance on the Kurnaul road, when some men came to us and begged of us not to proceed any further on the road, as the whole of the officers and ladies who had gone before us had been murdered, and that we should meet the same fate if we persisted on our journey. We knew not what to think, and at first resolved to continue our journey, let what might follow, when a very neatly dressed native, a perfect boy, made his appearance; he made us a most respectful salaam, and told us that he was in the employ of Lieutenant Holland, the quartermaster of the 38th, and advised our taking the road he pointed out, and very kindly took us off the Grand Trunk road into some fields. We could not drive quickly, as the land was perfectly rugged. We had only walked our horses a short distance when the thought struck me that the men who were surrounding us were nothing less than robbers themselves. This thought was very soon confirmed by the men coming up to us and asking for rupees. I had a few rupees in my jewel-box, but was afraid to open it lest they should see what it

contained, and therefore told them to go to our house, and take anything they took a fancy to. They particularly inquired where our house was situated, and I explained it to them as well as I could. They, however, fancied we had money with us, and insisted on my showing them the seat of the buggy, and they searched every corner of it; but still I managed to keep my jewel-box. I was driving, with Mrs. Wood by my side, and the hood of the buggy being down, the vile wretches had a capital opportunity of standing up behind, and with the number of tulwars and sticks which they had, could have killed us in a very short space of time. Mrs. Wood had a black velvet head-dress on, and as it had some bugles about it, it glittered a good deal in the moonlight; and when they saw this, they lost no time in tearing it from her head, and at the same time struck her rather heavily with one of their sticks. We had by this again reached the Grand Trunk road. Here we met the two guns which, by the way, had accompanied those who started before ourselves out of the station. A cavalry man was riding by the side of the guns, and at first I was inclined to think that aid had reached us from Umballa or Meerut; instead of

which, it was the guns returning to the city. I called out to the trooper, fearless at the time of being murdered, to assist us by directing us to the safest road. The answer I received was—"Go that way" (pointing to Kurnaul), "you will get murdered! Come this" (pointing to Delhi), "and you will meet the same fate!" We were then quite close to the gunners and the dreaded trooper; but they offered us no insolence. One of the gunners, in fact, got off the gun-carriage, and walked the whole way by the side of the buggy to the Company's gardens at Delhi, to which place we at last determined to go.

At the arched gate of the gardens we met two men, and from the implements which they held in their hands we took them for gardeners. They promised to shelter us in the huts in the garden, and we followed them most readily. Here they brought a *charpoy* for the doctor to rest on, and we sat by him. The gunner was still with us, and as we were close to the lines, we asked the gunner to go to the hospital for some lint, and at the same time to tell the native doctor to come to us, in order that the wound might be dressed. The man performed the errand most faithfully; for, about

an hour after we had dispatched him, a coolie came with the lint and bandages, telling us that the native doctors were tied hand and foot, and were, by order of the King of Delhi, placed in dhoolies, and were starting for the city, to take charge of the king's troops; otherwise they would most readily have come to our assistance. This is the message they sent to us. By this time the villagers had found out that two ladies and a doctor were secreted in the gardens, and bands after bands made their appearance. The gardener advised our taking shelter inside the hut, as he said they would be sure to kill him if they found he was protecting us. Up to this time both *charpoys* were outside in the garden, for the night was very hot. Finding that the bungalows were all in a blaze, we at first feared lest the hut might be fired likewise; we, however, found that, instead of its being thatched like most of them usually are, it was tiled, so hesitated not in taking refuge. The gardeners then locked us inside; but we had scarcely been shut up when another band of robbers, about fifty in number, made a rush at the door. We kept quite still, thinking they might leave us; but we heard them determine on breaking

the lock, which was soon effected, and into the hut they rushed. I went up to one of them and implored him to save us. He asked for what we had. I told him we had lost everything we possessed; but until he had searched us, he would not give credit to what we told him. Certain it was, for everything to my bonnet and cloak had been taken, and the carriage and buggy horses ridden away, whither we knew not. They were not satisfied with taking our horses, but broke up the carriage and buggy in our presence. Mrs. Wood and I knew not what to do, or where to go to. Certainly we could not remain in the gardens when daylight came; we therefore made up our minds to take the doctor as best we could, and go in search of a village. We had no one with us but the doctor's coachman, who remained with the doctor, whom we laid under a large mango tree, till we returned to take him for the night to a village near the artillery lines.

When we reached the village it must have been about three o'clock a.m., on the morning of the 12th. We had to plead very hard for shelter; but when we were admitted we found the people very kind, and they gave us native bread, and the doctor some milk to drink.

We tried to take rest, but sleep at a time like this was quite out of the question. We were in the open air till daybreak, when the head man of the village (a Hindoo) advised our going into a cowshed, the cattle having been taken out for our reception. Fortunate, indeed, it was that the good old man took these precautions; for soon after daylight one of the women ran to the shed and begged of us to remain quite quiet, as some sepoys were just entering their village. I at first thought she wished to frighten us, and the first thing I did was to look over the mats which formed the door, and sure enough there stood a sepoy, and had he been standing with his face towards the shed in which we were secreted he must have seen me. He was, however, standing talking to the old man of the village, and was making a request for carts and bullocks to assist in taking away the officers' property. He was dressed in every way like a sepoy, with the exception of pantaloons; in place of the latter article of dress, he had on the *dohtee*, usually worn by the natives of India. The man appeared in a great hurry to get rid of the sepoy, for he gave him bullocks and carts in a very short space of time. We were anxious

to set out that night on our wearisome journey, and begged some of the women of the village to give us water to wash the doctor's shirt. This they did most willingly, and glad, indeed, we were to have an opportunity of making him somewhat comfortable, for he was perfectly saturated with blood. The men of the village gave us some more bread, and after having filled our water-flask, which was an earthen one, we started about six p.m. on the 12th. As we knew not where to find the main road, one of the villagers, a tall fine young man, offered to accompany us a short distance. We availed ourselves of his kind offer, and he took us in safety to the Grand Trunk road. Here he parted from us, and five or six horrible-looking ruffians approached us. We told them that we had lost everything, and that we were then on our way to Kurnaul. They asked several questions, and each was replied to most civilly by me. When they found, from making a search on our persons themselves, that we had really nothing to be robbed of, one of the men inquired of one who had a *tulwar* (or sword) when he would take our lives. This I heard most distinctly, and seeing him who had made the above-mentioned

remark turn back with all but this one man (who, by the way, assured his friend that he would murder us—to use his own words—"a little way further on the road"), I went boldly up to the man and told him to spare me, as I had one little boy who had gone ahead, whither I knew not, and that I had left my husband on the parade-ground at Delhi the night before, and had not heard of him since, and as I wanted to hurry on in search of my child, I begged of him to spare my life. He appeared rather undecided, and I thought of my wedding-ring, which I still possessed, and at once took it off my finger and gave it to him. He took it, bade us good night, and went on in the same direction as ourselves, in advance.

I mentioned to Dr. and Mrs. Wood what I had heard these men talking about, and begged of them to go round the Ochterlony garden, so that in case he went on to bring out a few of his kin to meet us, we might deceive them, as this garden was some three miles in circumference, and the village to which we fancied he was proceeding was on the roadside, where the city and cantonment roads meet. We managed to get round the garden without any one noticing us; but

on reaching the other side we were rather startled by seeing what appeared to be a cluster of men standing in the middle of the road. We, however, continued on our march, and the closer we approached it, the more it looked like an assemblage. We were, however, agreeably disappointed at finding it to be a *dâk* carriage, with its wheels taken away and partially broken up. The villagers were firing in every direction, at what I know not, and every now and then we heard heavy guns. We managed to get as far as the cross-roads at about four o'clock in the morning of the 13th. Here we were surrounded by some very powerful-looking fellows. One of them I noticed as having an officer's sword, of which he appeared proud, for he drew it from its scabbard, and told us that the King of Delhi had ordered every European, either man, woman, or child, to be murdered. The doctor, who was very weak and exhausted, was then prostrate on the ground, and I fell on my knees, with the drawn sword over my head, and begged of him to save us. They insisted, before they allowed us to depart, on my giving up my dress. This I did, but after I had given it up to them, I begged they would again return it to me, and most

astonishing to say, they did so. We then started off again, and during the daytime we thought it would be wise to hide ourselves under bridges; but then, again, we could not possibly have kept the doctor alive in his weak state without a little milk, and, therefore, seeing a village close by, we made bold, and went to them to beg some milk for the doctor. The villagers were very kind, and not only gave us what we asked for the doctor, but gave us also some bread for ourselves; but, from fear of the sepoys and troopers, refused to give us shelter. We were therefore compelled to go in search of some other place of concealment for that day, and hot indeed we found it. The sun was most powerful, and the wind was like fire itself, to say nothing of the sand like so much hot charcoal under our feet. We first found shelter under a tree, and being close to a well, we found it a most convenient place; for we never felt the want of food, but water was indispensable, and having been furnished with a long piece of string, we managed to draw the water from the wells ourselves.

We were, however, shortly obliged to leave this place, as a great many native travellers were passing

and repassing, and from the Mussulmans who took the trouble to come off the road to see who we were, we received the greatest insults, and were compelled to go a greater distance off the road, where we found a good large hole surrounded with high grass. We very soon all sat down, and were not observed again during that day. We set out again when it was dark, and travelled as far as we could (which was but a short distance), when we laid the doctor under a tree, close to the roadside, to take a little rest. Mrs. Wood, too, was very tired, and she lay down on the bare ground likewise, while I sat leaning against the trunk of a tree, half asleep and half awake.

It was about one o'clock in the morning when I heard the distinct sound of horses' feet, and apparently a great number of people all talking at once. They were at so great a distance that I could not, on first hearing them, make out which way they were going. I, however, listened most attentively, and assured myself that they were on the road to Delhi. I then awoke Mrs. Wood, and told her to listen to the tramp and clatter of horses' feet, and as the horsemen were then very near to where we were lying, we drew an

old dirty sheet over us, to prevent them from seeing our white, or rather *black* petticoats. I should say that there were at least a hundred horses and ponies, and as part of them had already passed us, I began to hope that the rest would pass on without observing us. Scarcely had I so hoped, when one of the men shouted out, "Who are you lying down there?" I immediately went forward to him. By this time the horsemen were at a standstill. I approached the man, not uttering a word, when he exclaimed, "Why, it's a *mem sahib!*" (or in English, "a lady.") Finding that he spoke very kindly, I felt new life as it were in me, and told him that we were refugees from Delhi, and as we had a wounded man with us we could only travel at the rate of about four, or at the most, five miles during the night, and that we were taking a little rest by the roadside. I then inquired of them who they were, and whence they had come. They said that they belonged to the 2nd Irregulars, and that they were going to their homes on leave. I asked them where their homes were, and was told that they were on their way to Furruckabad—better known as Agra. The man who first approached us now inquired if we

would partake of some bread and sugar, which we most gladly accepted. The sepoy then asked me how we could expect to reach Kurnaul with a man with his under jaw partially shot away, and in his weak state. Thinking myself that we should never reach that place without some conveyance for the doctor, I asked them to take us all to Agra with them, and, after some persuasion, the head man of the party consented to take us, and as there were but two spare animals, one horse and one pony, there was a cry out how they could manage to convey a third person. I agreed to ride on one of the trooper's horses by their side, while the doctor was mounted on a beautiful white horse, and Mrs. Wood on a pony; and I can safely say I never mounted quicker in my life.

We were now on our way back to Delhi again; but the sepoy was very uneasy regarding us, and said, after we had gone some little distance on our journey, that he was afraid we should be detected, and thought it best we should dismount and find our way as best we could to Kurnaul. We therefore dismounted, and led our sick man back to the place where the sepoys had found us; here we rested for a little while, and we

then went on our way again. We reached a village about four o'clock the next morning, and sat down under a tree close to the village. At daybreak we saw the men going to their work, and as it was a Hindoo village, we were not afraid to venture to it. We were met by an old man, who took us into the village, and bade us rest quietly, as no harm would befall us there.

During that day we met with the utmost kindness from this man, who gave us bread and milk for the doctor, and had water heated to wash the doctor's wound. A Brahmin who lived in an adjoining village, heard we were taking shelter in a village next to his own, and he came to see us, bringing hundreds of his villagers to see us likewise. He insisted on making the doctor a wooden pipe to drink his milk through, as no sooner did he take nourishment than it ran outside his face; and most successfully did he make this pipe, for the doctor found it a great benefit. The Brahmin gave us the information that another doctor was in his village, and from his description of him we immediately concluded that it was Dr. Batson, of the 74th regiment. We sent him a message, asking him to come, if possible, and remove some portion of the

jaw, which was causing great pain and annoyance to Dr. Wood. He sent word back, according to the Brahmin's account, that he had no clothes, and could not appear before ladies, but sent some epsom salts and a wineglass to the doctor. We told the Brahmin that, as the old man of the village had promised us shelter for that night, one of us would go and see him in the morning. Mrs. Wood accordingly went, while I remained with the doctor; but when she reached the village, which was not more than a quarter of a mile distant, she was told by the villagers that he had left. The old man who had protected us the day before, was fearful of allowing us to again enter his village, lest the Delhi sepoys should hear of his secreting us, in which case, in all probability, his village would have been put in flames by them, and therefore told us to go away as quickly as possible.

It was a frightfully hot day, with a burning wind, and we felt quite unequal to proceed on our journey, and begged of another man of the same village to take care of us for that day. He promised to do so, and bade us follow him, which we very quickly did, and we soon found ourselves in a most dismal room, with

one door and no windows; he then brought us two beds, and told us to go to sleep. We had only been inside the room about half-an-hour, when about fifty Mussulmans came to the door with sticks, *tulwars* (swords), and other rude weapons, and commenced fighting among themselves. Their evident wish was to murder us; for the Brahmin whom I before mentioned, begged of us to leave the village there and then, and in so great a hurry were they to get quit of us, that they would not allow us time to fill our water-vessel.

Although we had been out from Delhi some five days, yet we were not more than about ten miles on our journey. We left this place about ten o'clock in the morning, and, great as was the heat, we travelled some five miles that day. We arrived at another village about two o'clock the same afternoon, and received the greatest kindness from most of those belonging to the village; but we were not permitted to enter it, and therefore sat in the verandah of one of the huts built for the coolies of the engineers' department of public works. We found the women very civil and kind to us at this place, much more so

than those whom we had just left. They brought us as much water as we required, and finding that they were most obliging and kind, we begged an old vessel of some kind to wash the rags for the doctor's face. They did everything for us that lay in their power, bringing us a curry made of vegetables; which was the nicest and best meal we had had since we left Delhi.

We again set out that night, after dark, and walked nearly to a place called Balghur; but when we found ourselves within sight of the village, we resolved on lying under a bridge, and so hiding ourselves from view. We were, however, detected, and before we could sit down, hundreds of the natives came to look at us, all being armed. They prevailed on us not to remain under the bridge, but to go with them to a road-sergeant's bungalow, which was empty and close by. We allowed ourselves to go with them, and here we were again made a perfect show of. We found the bungalow locked, and therefore took up our quarters in a stable belonging to the house. We remained in quiet, save that hundreds came and went away again, till one sly fellow, with a most horrible *tulwar*, became

most impertinent to us; and knowing that we could not harm him, he took advantage of us by drawing his *tulwar* from its sheath, and running his finger along the edge of it. At last he became unbearable, and Dr. Wood, who is a Roman-Catholic, took his gold cross from his breast. The brute seeing it, threatened our lives if we did not at once make it over to him. We lost no time in taking it from the doctor. The fellow very soon cut the black riband to which it was attached, and came to us with the gold in his hand, and begged of us to tell him what its value in rupees was. The doctor replied, "sixteen rupees." He then went away, and the ránee of Balghur, hearing that two ladies had arrived at a place close to her village, sent us word to go to her house. We fancied we were now quite safe, and went to her immediately we could. When we arrived at her place of residence, she ordered her servants to cook us some rice and milk for our dinner, and told us we could remain as long as we liked.

During the time we were in the stables belonging to the sergeant's bungalow, a native, who lived at no great distance, heard that two ladies and a wounded

man were at Balghur, and thinking we would go to him, being, as he was, a road-contractor, he sent some native conveyances drawn by bullocks, with armed men, numbering in all about fifty, headed by the very man who not three hours previous had threatened our lives, and robbed the doctor of his cross! I was sitting outside the building when the conveyances came up, and on seeing this wretch my heart leapt within me. I told the men, after they had delivered their message from the contractor, which was to the effect that we had better go to his village, that I could not trust myself to the man who had already threatened our lives: the reply I received was, "Oh, but he is our captain!" and a greater rogue even than the man in question, was selected as their colonel! As we found ourselves very well cared for, we refused to accompany these gentlemen, and sent them back. We were now only twenty-two miles from Delhi, and it was the 17th of the month. I asked the ránee, with whom we had an interview, to oblige us with a pen and ink, as a young man had promised to take a letter for us to Kurnaul, at which place we were given to understand many of the military were. The bearer of this letter

was to receive fifty rupees for his trouble. After having written it, we called the man to take charge of it, and there and then despatched him. We wrote to the Brigadier to send out a guard to take us safely to Kurnaul; but soon after the man had left, the ránee told us not to remain at her village the next night, as she was afraid of her own people rising against her. The real truth was, in my opinion, that the native who promised to befriend us by taking the letter to Kurnaul, turned into quite a different road, and thought to have had the pleasure of seeing us all taken prisoners to the King of Delhi. The ránee doubtless learnt the true story, and in order to save us, desired us to leave her village. She told us we had better take the road inland, and not travel, as before, along the Grand Trunk road. We had been sheltered by her for one night; but we had quantities of cows as companions, for we were shut up with about twenty of them.

The next day, about three o'clock p.m., we heard from the natives at the ránee's, that a tall gentleman had just arrived at Balghur, and was taking shelter in the stable adjoining the road-sergeant's bungalow. We were sure, from the description given, that it was

Major Paterson. He had, so the people told us, received a blow on his head, and was bleeding much. I, knowing that my husband was with Major Paterson when we left them at Delhi, immediately wrote and asked if Mr. Peile was with him. He had, of course, neither pen, ink, nor paper; but he procured an old piece of earthen pan, and a burnt stick, and wrote me that he had not seen my husband since the night of the 11th. We sent the major some rice, which the ránee had prepared for us, and begged of him to wait for us, as we were about to proceed to Kurnaul. Scarcely had half-an-hour elapsed, when I heard that another very thin gentleman had reached the village, and that he had heard that his wife was marching along the road, and that he was in search of her. This gentleman proved to be my husband. When he came to us, he was greatly altered, having been blistered from head to foot by the heat of the sun. He had, of course, lost everything, like ourselves, and strange to say, in the same garden, and nearly at the same time. The robbers took everything off him with the exception of a banyan and a pair of socks. He walked along till some of the natives gave him a little covering. He

then found a village not far from Delhi, the head man of which sheltered him for several days, and would have allowed him to remain longer had he wished; but hearing that two ladies with a wounded man were creeping along the road, he concluded that it must be our unfortunate selves. We then all met, and started from Balghur at about six p.m. on the 17th. We walked till about eleven o'clock that night, when we were received with great kindness by a *jemadar*, who put us into a kind of walled yard, and gave us beds, and some native bread for our suppers.

We passed a most comfortable night at this place, and again set out early on the morning of the 18th. We reached another village about six o'clock that morning, and the working men, seeing what difficulty we had in getting the doctor along, volunteered to carry him from village to village, where they could be relieved of their burden. This was a most kind offer, and was most gladly accepted by us. We then set out again, and reached a place called Nowsowlie at about three o'clock in the afternoon of the same day, completing a distance of nearly twenty miles in those few hours. I know not how we managed it, for the road

was a most rough one, and our feet were literally studded with thorns. We set out next morning for Lursowlie, a distance of about twenty-two miles from Kurnaul. We were frightfully burnt from the scorching sun and fiery wind, and as I had had no covering for my head all these days, I at times fancied my brain was affected. I begged of the man in authority at Nowsowlie, before starting, to give me a piece of cloth of some kind, which he did. This I made dripping wet, and bound it round my temples. We then all started off to Lursowlie. Major Paterson and I were on horses, and Mrs. Wood and Mr. Peile were on mules. The doctor was provided with a bed; and so we made our appearance at the latter place. We here met with more Company's servants, and seeing us so badly clad, they gave us more clothes.

We remained at Lursowlie the whole of that night and the next day; but we were in a sad state of mind from not receiving any answer to our request for assistance from Kurnaul. Our minds were, however, greatly relieved by hearing the sound of a coachman's horn about four p.m. the next day, and no sooner had the *shigram* (for so it is called) arrived, than we took our

seats. The Puttealah rajah had sent cavalry to escort us into Kurnaul—about forty horsemen; and a pretty appearance they had. They were mounted on beautiful horses, and were dressed in the gayest of colours. We arrived at Kurnaul that night about seven o'clock, and were most kindly received by Mr. Rigby, of the engineers' department. We were informed, on our arrival, that the British force would all meet at this place, and would march on Delhi in about a fortnight. The roads being still most unsafe, we were advised to remain at Kurnaul till the regiments were moving downwards, when we could proceed to the hills.

All this time I knew not where my dear child was, further than that the people with whom he went had reached Meerut in safety. There was no way of sending a letter by *dâk;* and therefore I paid a Brahmin twenty rupees to go to Meerut with a letter from me to the lady and gentleman who took charge of my child. The Brahmin dressed himself as a native priest, and took my letter quite safely, and brought me back an answer, saying that my little boy was quite safe, and that he reached Meerut on the evening of the 12th at sunset; the roads were too dangerous to admit of his

being brought to me, and therefore, for safety's sake, I was compelled to let him remain there, at which place he still is; and from what I hear from the chaplain at Meerut, he is very well and happy, which is a great comfort to me.

We had only been at Kurnaul a few days, when the Commander-in-Chief, the Hon. George Anson, died from the effects of cholera. He was taken ill, I believe, at about ten o'clock on the night of the 26th of May, and was a corpse by four o'clock on the morning of the 28th; he was buried that same evening at sunset.

We started in two *dâk* carriages on the 28th, at about five o'clock p.m., and arrived at a place called Peeplee. Here the roads are rather bad, and travellers are obliged, at this place, either to travel in a very strong cart, drawn by bullocks, or to take *palkees*. As we were a party of five, we took the cart, and the roads being so sandy, we were a long time getting to Umballa. Between Peeplee and the latter station we met the greater part of the Delhi Field force. Many of the officers came up to us and congratulated us on our escape. We met the force at about three o'clock on the morning of the 29th; the greater part of them were

in high spirits, singing and talking most cheerfully. We were a long time reaching Umballa, owing to the bad state of the roads; when, however, we had so far completed our journey, we took shelter in the *dâk* bungalow during the remainder of that day. We were anxious to get to Simla as quickly as possible, and therefore ordered a kind of light cart to convey Major Paterson, Mrs. Wood, Mr. Peile, and myself, to Kalka, while the doctor travelled in a dhooly. We started from Umballa that night, and reached Kalka, just at the foot of the hills, at about ten a.m. on the 30th.

Here we remained during the day, and again set off in *jampans* carried by hill men, to a small hill station called Kussowlee, which we reached about twelve o'clock the same night; and here Major Paterson left us and proceeded to Simla. We were in want of medical aid, and therefore remained at the *dâk* bungalow that night and the following day and night, and started for Simla on the evening of the 1st of June. We halted at one or two places on our way, and therefore did not reach Simla till the evening of the 2nd. Mrs. Paterson, who fortunately escaped with the first party, had reached Simla some days previous to our

arriving at Kurnaul, and was quite well, with her two children, with whom she fled. She very kindly gave us up her house, as she herself had taken up her quarters with her mother till we could suit ourselves. This was soon accomplished; and we are now residing at Camden Villa, together with Dr. Wood and his wife. We have been very fortunate in meeting with many kind friends, who have sent us old clothes to wear till we could supply ourselves with some, and for which we are most grateful; for we arrived here without a thing to put on.

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APPENDIX B.

"MUTINY MEMOIRS," BY COLONEL A. R. D. MACKENZIE.

(See page 142.)

"THE casualties on our side on the morning of the 14th September were 1145 killed and wounded. The result of the day's fighting was that we had forced our way into a small corner of the city, and there 'hung on by our teeth.' Slight and precarious as was the grip which we had thus obtained on the throat of the enemy, it yet proved sufficient for eventual success; but there can be no dispute that for the next forty-eight hours the position was critical. The great city, with its intricate network of narrow lanes crookedly piercing through masses of lofty brick-built houses—with its strong places such as the Magazine, the King's Palace, Selimgurh, and the Jumma Musjid—was yet unconquered and defiant; the roar of combat continued

without ceasing. The General, Sir Archdale Wilson, worn out with illness and want of rest, and with the strain of long-continued anxiety, seemed to those around him to be losing heart and to be half inclined to abandon our dearly-earned footing within the walls, and to withdraw the troops once more to the old position outside. Worse than all, great stores of brandy and wine, which had been cunningly left by the rebels exposed to the sight of our soldiers, fell into their hands, and the inevitable result followed. Numbers of our men eagerly swallowed the fiery poison; and those who had hitherto proved themselves heroes now wallowed in the gutters, helpless and imbecile. Most providentially the enemy did not seize upon that moment for a vigorous onslaught. If they had done so it would probably have been successful, and the British Empire in India would have staggered under a crushing and shameful blow from the worst and most persistent foe of its army, strong drink. Vigorous measures were, however, promptly taken. Working parties, strongly officered, were told off to destroy the bottles and empty the casks; and very soon all danger from this source was averted."

APPENDIX C.

"STORY OF CAWNPORE," BY G. O. TREVELYAN.

(See page 171.)

"THE last to quit the intrenchment was Major Vibart, of the 2nd Cavalry. He brought up the rear of the column alone, amidst a numerous escort of mutineers belonging to his late regiment, who insisted on conveying his luggage down to the landing-place — a marked instance of complaisance on the part of these gentlemen-troopers.

"Presently the van reached the white rails of the wooden bridge, and, leaving them on the left hand, turned aside into the fatal ravine. A vast multitude, speechless and motionless as spectres, watched their descent into that valley of the shadow of death.

* * * * * *

"And now the last Englishman walked down into the lane; and immediately the troops who had been appointed to that duty formed a double line across the mouth of the gorge, and told all who were not concerned to retire and keep aloof, for that within that passage there was no admittance save on one baleful business. Meantime the embarkation was progressing under serious difficulties. No temporary pier had been provided, nor even a plank to serve as gangway. None of the Hindoo boatmen or bearers spoke a word or lent a hand, while, standing knee-deep in the stream, our officers hoisted in the wounded and the women. Already they were themselves preparing to scramble on board—already the children were rejoicing over the sight of some boiled rice which they had discovered in the corner of a barge —when, amidst the sinister silence which prevailed, the blast of a bugle came pealing down the defile. Thereupon the native rowers leaped into the water, and splashed towards dry ground; while those very troopers who had conducted Major Vibart from the barrack with such professions of esteem discharged their carbines at the nearest vessel. The Englishmen whose rifles were handy, at once opened fire, some on the traitorous crews,

others on the hypocritical scoundrels who had commenced the attack. But of a sudden several of the straw roofs burst into a flame, and almost the entire fleet was blazing in the twinkling of an eye. The red-hot charcoal had done its work.[c] At the same moment from either shore broke forth a storm of grape and musketry. To the imagination of our countrymen, oppressed and bewildered by the infernal tumult, it seemed that the land was alive with a hundred cannon and a myriad of sharpshooters. The wounded perished under the burning thatch, while all who could shift for themselves dropped into the river. Of the ladies, some crouching beneath the overhanging prows, some wading up to their chins along the shelving bottom, sought shelter from the bullets, which sprinkled the surface like falling rain. The men set their shoulders against the planking, and tried to launch off into the mid-current. But he who had chosen those moorings never intended that the keels should leave the sand-bank on which they lay.

"When, after the lapse of some twenty minutes, the dead began to outnumber the living—when the fire slackened, as the marks grew few and far between—

then the sepoys and troopers, who had been drawn up to the right of the temple, plunged into the river, sabre between teeth, and pistol in hand. Some were stabbed with bayonets; others cut down, while little children were torn in pieces, and thrown into the river.

"At last the women and children, whom the shot had missed, and the flames spared, were collected and brought to land. Many were pulled out from under the charred woodwork of boats, and others were driven up from four feet depth of water. And then they were led back along the road which they had traversed a few hours before; not as they came, for nothing was left to them now, save a new grief and a sharper terror."

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